

**SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION**  
**OF IMPRISONED BOYS**  
**IN THE PHILIPPINES**

by

**MARION JUNE DERBYSHIRE**

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham

For the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Theology and Religion

College of Arts and Law

University of Birmingham

March 2014

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis identifies processes of ‘spiritual transformation’ amongst boys from prison in the Philippines. It is a qualitative study for which data were collected largely by means of interviews and observation in jails and rehabilitation centres in the Philippines.

The thesis argues that boys who suffer deprivation at home, on the streets and in jail become alienated from society. When events lead to an experience of spiritual awakening, the subsequent treatment they receive can either lead them to make changes in their lives or it can thwart them from doing so. With encouragement, boys are able to consolidate positive life changes and reach a lasting condition of spiritual transformation.

The thesis demonstrates how some programmes of rehabilitation in the Philippines allow deprived children to experience and develop constructive relationships of trust, reliance, attachment and commitment, and how this assists the development of faith that is a significant component of spiritual transformation. The thesis shows how such programmes catalyse and nurture this spiritual transformation.

This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge in the area of rehabilitation of Children in Conflict with the Law and the spiritual aspects of rehabilitation. It builds upon previous research in the field of faith development and adds to this body of scholarship. Findings gained from this research can be applied to policy elsewhere.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

From conception to maturity, this research study was exciting and demanding but rarely solitary. So many people accompanied me along at least part of the road that it would be impossible to acknowledge each individually. Nevertheless, I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made a contribution, whether large or small.

The journey began, in a sense, with the dedicated pioneers who founded the Viva Network: Patrick and Emily McDonald, Martin Hull and Katy Miles. They encouraged and supported my initial forays into the territory of grass roots programmes for children in developing countries, where I first discovered the existence of a million incarcerated minors. This sparked my interest and became the springboard for this research.

I gratefully received grants towards study and travel costs from three Quaker bodies: Friends House, the Somerset Friends Charitable Trust and the Francis Camfield Trust.

I thank all the staff members and Friends in Residence of the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, which became my second home for seven years: its comfortable accommodation and superb facilities, along with its peaceful setting and friendly atmosphere, made it an ideal place to study and to network. Heather and Robert Bryce also welcomed me into their home with generous hospitality, constant friendship and invaluable computer technology support. In the Philippines, I was well cared for, fed and accommodated at the PREDA centre, in the home of Rainero Lucero and at the Bishops House in Butuan, making my research trip enjoyable as well as rewarding.

The fieldwork was enabled by the kind invitation of Shay Cullen and greatly enriched by the enthusiastic assistance of Francis Bermido, Menchie and Raul Ruana, Rainera and YenYen Lucero and Carlito Clase. Most research participants must remain anonymous, due to constraints of confidentiality and privacy. Boys in jails and rehabilitation centres readily accepted me and related their experiences, both painful and joyous, while staff members gave their time and energy to explain the substance, rationale and constraints of their work. Since data from these boys and staff members form the backbone of this study, I am greatly indebted to every one of them.

I sincerely thank Ben Pink Dandelion, my academic supervisor, for his patient guidance, unstinting attention, profound insight and personal, caring support throughout the process.

I am grateful to Emma le Beau, Tony Jaques, Judith Jenner, Roger Cullen and Janet Weatherly for their various contributions in developing my thinking about research design, thesis content and finishing touches and I thank Rosemarie Kossov and Maria Kennedy for providing a careful proof-reading service at the final stages.

My deepest appreciation goes to my husband, Les Derbyshire, who with tender care, practical support and good humour travelled with me every step of the way, as my research assistant, sounding-board, computer technician, porter, printer and immeasurably more.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AKBAY	Aksyon ng Kabataan at mga bata para sa Bayan (translates as ‘Children and youth Action for the Nation’)
ALS	Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education
BJMP	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology
CCCWPC	Cebu City Commission for the Welfare and Protection of Children
CCOSCC	Cebu City Operation Second Chance Centre
CICL	Children in Conflict with the Law
CRADLE	Center for Restorative Activities, Development and Learning Experience
CRC 1989	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
DCI	Defence for Children International
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development (Philippines)
FREELAVA	Free Rehabilitation, Economic, Education and Legal Assistance Volunteers Association, Inc.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPH	Government of the Philippines
HDI	Human Development Index
LA	Local Authority
LASCH	Local Authority Secure Children’s Home
LSWDO	Local Social Welfare and Development Office
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	New People’s Army

PEPS	Preventive Education and Public Speaking
PEPT	Philippine Educational Placement Test
PHDT	Personality and Human Development Training
PREDA	People's Recovery Empowerment and Development Assistance
RA9344	Republic of the Philippines Act 9344
RRCY	Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth
SPMTC	San Pedro Manpower Training Centre
STC	Secure Training Centre
SWO	Social Welfare Officer
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US(A)	United States (of America)
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRERU	Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit
YFC	Youth for Christ
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOI	Young Offender Institution

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **THESIS FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT**

### **Introduction**

This thesis investigates and identifies processes of ‘spiritual transformation’ in rehabilitation programmes for boys from prison in the Philippines. Data were collected for this qualitative research by means of individual and group interviews and participant and non-participant observation in ten institutions during five weeks fieldwork in the Philippines. Members of staff and resident boys were interviewed in jails and rehabilitation centres and some boys were visited in their homes.

The thesis argues that boys who suffer deprivation at home, on the streets and in jail become alienated from society. When events lead to an experience of spiritual awakening, the treatment subsequently received by boys can either lead them to make changes in their lives or it can thwart them from doing so. With encouragement, boys are able to consolidate positive life changes and in so doing reach a more stable, lasting condition of spiritual transformation.

This thesis demonstrates how some programmes of care and rehabilitation in the Philippines allow deprived children to experience and develop constructive relationships of trust, reliance, attachment and commitment, perhaps for the first time, and how this assists the development of faith that is a significant component of spiritual



transformation. The thesis shows how rehabilitation programmes seek to bring about and nurture this spiritual transformation in the lives of children in their care. It makes an original contribution to knowledge regarding rehabilitation of ‘Children in Conflict with the Law’<sup>1</sup> and the spiritual aspects of rehabilitation. It builds upon previous research in the field of faith development and adds to this body of scholarship. Findings gained from this research demonstrate action that can be applied to future policy and practice.

Chapter One provides a framework and context for the thesis. Section 1.1. defines pivotal terms and examines the theoretical framework. Section 1.2. presents an international perspective regarding imprisoned children (1.2.1), provides an introduction to the Philippines (1.2.2.) and discusses prisons and rehabilitation centres as organisations (1.2.3.). It reviews scholarship related to children and spirituality (1.2.4.) and to James Fowler’s and post-Fowler faith development theory (1.2.5.). Section 1.3. examines Nicola Slee’s research and theory of women’s faith development.<sup>2</sup> Section 1.4. discusses the application of Slee’s theory to this thesis, comparing the characteristics of research constituencies and similarities of research design, methodology and findings, and notes the relevance of these findings to the rehabilitation of imprisoned children.

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to hereafter by the acronym CICL. ‘A child (any person under the age of 18) is in conflict with the law where he or she has committed or has been accused of having committed an offence. Depending upon the local context, children may also be in conflict with the law where they are dealt with by the juvenile justice or adult criminal justice system for reason of being considered to be in danger by virtue of their behaviour or the environment in which they live. In many countries the term juvenile is used and defined depending on the age of criminal responsibility.’ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. [http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC\\_Prison\\_reform\\_concept\\_note.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/UNODC_Prison_reform_concept_note.pdf) accessed 01/10/2012.

<sup>2</sup> Nicola Slee, *Women’s Faith Development: Patterns and Processes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

The chapter concludes with a summary outline of the thesis structure.

## **1.1. Definitions and theoretical framework**

### **Defining spiritual transformation**

This section examines the implications of using the word ‘spiritual’ (1.1.1.), discusses the concept of ‘transformation’ and combines these to create a working definition of ‘spiritual transformation’ (1.1.2.). It demonstrates ways in which spiritual transformation can be identified (1.1.3.)

#### **1.1.1. Spiritual**

Recent research in the field of spirituality and religion has informed my use of the term ‘spiritual’.<sup>3</sup> Neville Symington and Jon Stokes draw this distinction: ‘Spirituality is essentially individual whereas religion is the institutionalization of the spiritual enlightenment of the individual.’<sup>4</sup> Other scholars see ‘spirituality’ not only as individual but also as distinctly subjective. Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead discuss the perceived recent significant ‘turn’ or ‘shift’ from ‘life-as’, in which life is lived with reference to external authority and ‘role-oriented’ expectations, towards ‘subjective life’, which describes ‘life lived by reference to one’s own subjective experiences.’<sup>5</sup> They develop

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<sup>3</sup> All the works cited here relate to Christianity in the contemporary western world, but my study refers to the Philippines and its findings may be applicable to other faith traditions.

<sup>4</sup> Neville Symington and Jon Stokes, *Emotion and Spirit: Questioning the Claims of Psychoanalysis and Religion* (London: Karnac 1994), 47.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 2. They make use of the work of Charles Taylor, who describes ‘the massive subjective turn of modern culture’: see Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,

this theme to distinguish between ‘life-as religion’ and ‘subjective-life spirituality’. In the latter, the attention of individuals is ‘directed towards oneself and one’s inner life’, rather than directed, as in the former, ‘away from oneself towards something higher’.<sup>6</sup> Subjective spirituality is manifested in and nurtured by activities that focus attention on the individual and the internal self.<sup>7</sup> Thus, for Heelas and Woodhead, the term ‘spirituality’ relates to meaning and truth that is found in life in the world, as opposed to the term ‘religion’, which expresses commitment to a ‘higher truth’ that lies beyond earthly life and is ‘exclusively related to specific externals’ such as scriptures, dogmas and rituals.<sup>8</sup> Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead additionally observe that scholars of religion have focused on ‘religions with texts, doctrines, beliefs, and literate male elites’ and largely neglected forms of religion or ‘spirituality’ concerned with ‘supporting the everyday lives of ordinary people’.<sup>9</sup>

David Tacey comments upon this contemporary theory of the existence of personal forms of spirituality that eschew the confines of institutional religion, claiming that: ‘The spiritual life is no longer a specialist concern, confined to the interests of a religious group. No membership is required to relate to spirit.’ In making this distinction, he maintains that relating to spirit is not incompatible with atheism: ‘Spirituality is now the

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1991), 26.

<sup>6</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 12-13.

<sup>7</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 13.

<sup>8</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 162.

concern of everyone, religious or secular, young or old, atheist or believer, educated or otherwise, because we inhabit a different world in which spirit is making new and quite extraordinary demands.’<sup>10</sup>

To summarise the commonalities in these theories: spirituality is not the same as religion; spirituality is individual, whereas religion is corporate and institutional; spirituality is found in subjective life, whereas religion is directed towards the transcendent; spirituality is the concern of everyone, whilst religion is confined to an elite membership group; spirituality is focused on the ordinary person’s everyday life, whereas religion makes use of externals such as texts, doctrines and beliefs. The use of the term ‘spiritual’ in this thesis is founded on these commonalities.

However, whilst acknowledging Heelas and Woodhead’s claim that spirituality is becoming subjective, focusing on self, rather than directed ‘away from oneself towards something higher’,<sup>11</sup> Tacey’s insight that spirituality is not confined to religion but is also present within religion is incorporated into the theory. I have not dismissed or excluded the transcendent from this theory of human spirituality, not least because it features strongly in the research data. Thus I keep the boundary of spirituality within the idea of relating to a transcendent spirit, that is a source of spiritual ‘power’, whether it be seen as internal or external, and whether it be called God, the Other or whatever.

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<sup>10</sup> David Tacey, *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality* (Hove: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 12-13. They apply this argument to the contemporary western culture in which their research is located.

Riis and Woodhead demonstrate that emotion plays a part in spiritual life.<sup>12</sup> They argue that, although personal forms of spirituality that incorporate self-awareness and subjectivity, to the point of making subjective life sacred, often draw from traditional spiritual practice, they do not expect emotional conformity but, ‘cultivate a subjectively focused spirituality based around validation of people’s unique inner lives.’<sup>13</sup> Whilst recognising this has links with contemporary emotional therapy, they claim that it also treats emotion and personal intuition as sacred, as the ‘authoritative voice’ of an ‘inner spiritual guide’ or ‘god within’.<sup>14</sup> They say that ‘the neglect of emotion reflects class, ethnic, and gender bias in the study of religion’ and ‘religions that speak to the emotions have a more widespread appeal, including for those with little schooling and extensive experience of material hardship.’<sup>15</sup>

This emphasis on the ordinary, uneducated person who has suffered hardship endorses the relevance of this argument for my research constituency. Spiritual teaching that takes account of emotion is relevant and effective for the faith development of this group. However, definitions of spiritual development that ‘sacralize’ personal emotions, to the extent that belief in God is supplanted, conflict with the experience of the boys and the spiritual basis of the rehabilitation programmes investigated for this research.

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<sup>12</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

<sup>13</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

<sup>14</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

<sup>15</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

A holistic definition that retains a concept of the divine within spirituality, but also incorporates the comprehensive spectrum of personal relationships and emotional, physical, psychological, intellectual and recreational aspects of human life more adequately reflects the data. This ‘divine’ may be called God or the Other by many, but, wary of the inherent personification, I prefer the term ‘divine spirit’.<sup>16</sup> It conveys the idea of something ever-present, which is both personal and communal, internal and external, essential to life, everywhere and yet unseen, needs no texts, rituals or doctrines and is accessible to all and yet sacred in its essence.<sup>17</sup>

Philip Sheldrake argues that the word ‘spirituality’ relates to ‘the deepest values and meanings by which people seek to live’ and that this implies ‘some kind of vision of the human spirit and of what will assist it to achieve its full potential.’<sup>18</sup> This theory is basic to the argument of this thesis, which focuses on that vision as it relates to one sector of the population. In Sheldrake’s view, consumerist ‘life-style spirituality’ focuses ‘either on individual self-realization or on some kind of inwardness’ and ‘promotes fitness, healthy living, and holistic well-being.’<sup>19</sup> When related to religion, however, specifically Christianity, ‘spirituality refers to the way our fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices reflect particular understandings of God, human identity, and the

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<sup>16</sup> Etymologically derived from the Latin *spiritus*, literally, ‘breath’, from *spirare* ‘to breathe’.

<sup>17</sup> However, the word ‘God’ is used frequently in the thesis as it arises directly from the data.

<sup>18</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 1.

<sup>19</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 1.

material world as the context for human transformation.’<sup>20</sup> In early Christianity, a ‘spiritual’ person was ‘simply someone within whom the Spirit of God dwelt or who lived under the influence of the Spirit of God.’<sup>21</sup> The fundamental feature of this Christian spirituality was discipleship, which ‘is reducible neither to devotional practices nor to some abstract framework of beliefs’, but ‘is a complete way of life.’<sup>22</sup> Thus, even Christian spirituality is not confined to religious practice but involves lifestyle choices.

For the purposes of this thesis, the meaning of the term ‘spiritual’ is not confined to religious belief or practice. Although religion can be a significant component of spirituality, in the sense in which the term is used in this thesis, spirituality is universal and holistic. It involves finding meaning and purpose both subjectively and in connection with the world, in the context of relationship with the divine spirit. I define the term ‘spiritual’ as the range of ways in which humankind makes or finds purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, self, others and the natural world.

### **1.1.2. Spiritual transformation**

The term ‘transformation’ generally indicates a recognisable and significant change for the better in the life of an individual. Personal counselling and psychotherapy are now commonly used to effect such transformation. Spiritual transformation has, for some

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<sup>20</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 14.

<sup>22</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 193.

scholars, become inseparable from these subjective means of effecting personal transformation. For example, Heelas and Woodhead claim that participants in ‘subjective spirituality’ or ‘well-being’ activities, such as yoga or meditation, are enabled to ‘remain true to themselves’ whilst ‘little or no distinction’ is made ‘between personal and spiritual growth.’<sup>23</sup> However, since my definition of ‘spiritual’ includes relationship with a divine spirit, which is an element beyond the solely personal, I retain some distinction between the two, as different aspects of a multifaceted construct of human development. My definition of spiritual transformation takes the concept of personal transformation in conjunction with my definition of the term ‘spiritual’, thus taking into account relationship with divine spirit.

The search for the meaning of ‘spiritual transformation’ is illuminated by the work of Fowler in the field of faith development theory.<sup>24</sup> His theory, building upon the child psychology and stage development theories of Piaget<sup>25</sup> and Niebuhr,<sup>26</sup> views spiritual change in terms of progressive, immutable stages of faith development. It was later critiqued and developed by Fowler<sup>27</sup> and by many other scholars,<sup>28</sup> including feminist

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<sup>23</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> James Fowler, ‘Faith and the Structuring of Meaning’, in Christiane Brusselmans, ed., *Toward Moral and Religious Maturity* (Morristown, NJ.: Silver Burdett Company, 1980). Fowler’s faith development theory is described more fully in 1.2.5.a).

<sup>25</sup> Piaget, *The Child’s Perception of the World*; Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child*.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960).

<sup>27</sup> For example, James Fowler, ‘Faith and the Structuring of Meaning’, in Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks, eds, *Faith Development and Fowler* (Birmingham, AL.: Religious Education Press, 1986); James Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); James Fowler, *Weaving the New Creation: Stages of Faith and the Public Church* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 1991a). James Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, in Fritz Oser and W. George Scarlett, eds,



theologians, such as Maria Harris<sup>29</sup> and Nicola Slee.<sup>30</sup> Faith development research has established that one of the significant features of faith is relational:<sup>31</sup> faith begins in relationship, which involves trust, reliance and dependence upon the other and features ‘attachment’, ‘commitment’ and ‘loyalty’.<sup>32</sup> In psychological terms, the basis of this development may be found in the early attachment of a child to a parental figure, especially the mother.<sup>33</sup> A child who has suffered parental neglect can experience a loss of identity and find ways of compensating for this and regaining a sense of self within a church or through God, by forming a ‘symbiotic relationship to the divinity which functions to meet the child’s needs for parental intimacy and bonding.’<sup>34</sup>

Slee uses the term ‘transformation’, in the context of women’s faith development,<sup>35</sup> to describe a change that affects a person’s thinking and behaviour. Life takes on a new sense of purpose and meaning and a change in one’s relationships with God, with other

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*Religious Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1991b), 27-45.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks, eds, *Faith Development and Fowler* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986).

<sup>29</sup> Maria Harris, ‘Completion and Faith Development’, in Craig Dykstra and Sharon Parks, eds, *Faith Development and Fowler* (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1986), 115–136.

<sup>30</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*. Slee’s faith development theory is described more fully in 1.3.

<sup>31</sup> Fowler, ‘Faith and the Structuring of Meaning’ (1986), 16-19; Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>32</sup> Fowler, ‘Faith and the Structuring of Meaning’ (1986), 16.

<sup>33</sup> Jean Piaget, *To Understand Is To Invent: The Future of Education* (New York: Grossman, 1976).

<sup>34</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 69.

<sup>35</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

people and with the world, with consequent changes in one's 'core values'.<sup>36</sup> My definition of 'spiritual' echoes this description in terms of relationship; hence, the way in which 'spiritual transformation' is defined within this thesis accords with this notion of enhanced relationality.

This thesis treats 'spiritual transformation' as a process that develops progressively rather than as a complete and finite conversion. This changing state brings greater capacity to make or find new meaning and purpose in life, which, combined with the new way of relating, can lead to a greater sense of responsibility and a changed value system. Whilst both spiritual teaching and spiritual practice can be offered, or even imposed, they can only be of value if they are internalised to the extent that lasting change is effected. The total effect of these changes can be described as a significant change in mindset and attitudes.

Drawing together these strands, 'spiritual transformation' is defined within this thesis as 'a significant positive development in one's ability to make or find purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, oneself, others and the natural world.'

### **1.1.3. Identifying spiritual transformation**

This thesis identifies the existence of this phenomenon in the lives of imprisoned boys and discusses the significance of various elements of rehabilitation programmes that

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<sup>36</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 134.

nurture spiritual development and stimulate or facilitate processes of transformation. It tracks the conditions that are required for spiritual teaching to be internalised to the extent that spiritual transformation is encouraged and enabled. Since spirituality implies a 'vision of the human spirit' and resources to 'achieve its full potential',<sup>37</sup> this thesis identifies in the research data indications of enhanced spirituality and factors that assist boys towards potential transformation. From the standpoint that 'understandings of God, human identity, and the material world' are reflected in our 'fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices' in the context of transformation,<sup>38</sup> observation of the changing values, lifestyles and spiritual practices of the research subjects assists in identifying potential transformation.

Kieran Flanagan asserts that: 'Spiritual practices are linked to the formation of character and the nurture of a life of virtue.'<sup>39</sup> As a corollary, this thesis takes confirmation of stronger character formation and increased virtue as one measure of spiritual transformation. In a similar vein, Symington and Stokes draw no line between spirituality and morality because, as moral beings, our lives are the products of the choices we make, often without awareness: 'Spirituality is simply the attention we give to these choices that are enacted at every moment of our lives. True spirituality is attention to the moral dimension in our lives.'<sup>40</sup> Equally, indications of moral changes in

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<sup>37</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 1.

<sup>38</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 2.

<sup>39</sup> Kieran Flanagan, 'Visual Spirituality: An Eye for Religion', in Kieran Flanagan and Peter C. Jupp, eds, *A Sociology of Spirituality* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 238.

<sup>40</sup> Symington and Stokes, *Emotion & Spirit*, 48.

the research subjects are used to support the view that spiritual development is taking place.

The data from interviews with boys and staff members in the Philippines can be aligned to some extent with Fowler's stages of faith development<sup>41</sup> and with Slee's three distinct patterns of faith development: alienation, awakenings and relationality.<sup>42</sup> Leslie Francis and Mandy Robbins have researched the phenomenon of 'spiritual health' in adolescents by gathering quantitative data from extensive questions in four domains: personal, communal, environmental and transcendental.<sup>43</sup> Their findings show some changes in attitude across the adolescent age range.<sup>44</sup> The analysis of my data alludes to similar themes but this thesis is more concerned with process than with measurement of trends in spiritual health. Of particular interest, however, is their conclusion that not all the observed changes are inevitable consequences of ageing and, 'consequently, well-planned intervention strategies during school time and during leisure-time may help to improve the trajectory of spiritual health during the compulsory years of schooling.'<sup>45</sup>

The rehabilitation programmes that I researched use 'well-planned intervention

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<sup>41</sup> James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (London: Harper and Row, 1981).

<sup>42</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 14; 81-162. Similar patterns identified from the research data are discussed in 1.2.5., 1.3., 3.2., 4.2., 4.3., 5.1. and 5.2. of this thesis.

<sup>43</sup> Leslie Francis and Mandy Robbins, *Urban Hope and Spiritual Health: The Adolescent Voice* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2005). These four domains were developed in previous work by John Fisher and others. See, for example: John W. Fisher, 'Being human, becoming whole: Understanding spiritual health and well-being', *Journal of Christian Education* 43 (2000): 37-42; John W. Fisher, Leslie Francis and Peter Johnson, 'Assessing spiritual health via four domains of spiritual wellbeing: the SH4DI', *Pastoral Psychology* 51 (2000): 3-11.

<sup>44</sup> Francis and Robbins, *Urban Hope and Spiritual Health*, 64-73.

<sup>45</sup> Francis and Robbins, *Urban Hope and Spiritual Health*, 73.

strategies’ to improve the spiritual health of residents during their stay at a centre.

Kate Cairns, concerned with victims of sexual abuse, states: ‘professional support, effective therapy, religious faith and moral principles combine to bring about eventual transformation.’<sup>46</sup> The programmes of care observed for this study are designed to be therapeutic, restorative and holistic, incorporating physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social elements, and are based on ‘trust, affirmation, encouragement and respect’.<sup>47</sup>

Reconciliation is also central to Christian faith and therefore to spirituality.<sup>48</sup> Genuinely rehabilitative programmes for children released from detention offer counselling and activities, devised to address and heal the deprivation and emotional trauma of imprisonment and the problems within family life. They seek to bring about the child’s reconciliation with family members.

The data collected in the Philippines are analysed in the light of these theories<sup>49</sup> in order to determine what elements of the holistic programmes of activities and teaching help the participants to develop their spirituality so that their lives have more meaning and purpose.

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<sup>46</sup> Kate Cairns, *Surviving paedophilia: traumatic stress after organised and network child sexual abuse* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 1999), 137.

<sup>47</sup> Shay Cullen, *Passion and Power* (Mullingar: Killynon House, 2006), 499.

<sup>48</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 193.

<sup>49</sup> In 3.2, 4.2, 4.3. and 5.1.

## 1.2. Context

This section contextualises this study in terms of issues relating to children in prison (1.2.1), background information about the Philippines (1.2.2.), prisons and rehabilitation centres as organisations (1.2.3.), children and spirituality (1.2.4.) and Fowler and post-Fowler faith development theory (1.2.5.).

### 1.2.1. Child imprisonment in developing countries

This thesis addresses issues relating to child prisoners and some processes that enable them to make effective changes in their lives. The terms ‘children’, ‘minors’, ‘young people’ and ‘juveniles’ are used interchangeably to denote all persons below the age of 18 years, regardless of the locally established minimum age of criminal responsibility. This section examines the situation of CICL in developing countries. It discusses the extent of child imprisonment, the reasons for jail sentences, prison conditions, the treatment minors receive and whether practice complies with the terms of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>50</sup>

The ‘most widely accepted estimate’ of the child prison population is about one million, worldwide.<sup>51</sup> In 2005, Jubilee Action,<sup>52</sup> in partnership with the PREDA Foundation<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Shay Cullen, Emma le Beau, Mike Morris, Mark Rowland, Ruth Scammell, Rosemary Sheppard, Danny Smith and Derek Williams, eds, *kids behind bars WHY WE MUST ACT: A Global Report into Children in Prison* (Guildford: Jubilee Action, 2005), 10. The CRC is an international effort to persuade nations to comply with charters of human rights for children, including those in conflict with the law. Every nation except the United States of America has ratified the CRC. Somalia was also an exception at the time of the Jubilee Action report but became a signatory in 2010.

<sup>51</sup> Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF’s Regional Advisor for Child Protection, cited in Cullen, et al. *kids behind bars*, 8.

commissioned lawyers to investigate the nature and extent of child imprisonment in 15 countries: Albania, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Tanzania and Uganda.<sup>54</sup> All have chronic problems of poverty and unemployment and significant numbers of children living or working on the streets.<sup>55</sup>

The researchers entered jails to observe conditions and talk to minors. Together with information gleaned from published reports and interviews with experts in the field, their findings were published as 'A Global Report into Children in Prison'. This summary of child imprisonment in developing countries is based upon and illustrated by the findings of that report. Since data collection depends upon access and prisons are under state control, information is unattainable in many places. It seems probable that the numbers of child prisoners and the jail conditions may be worse in countries denying access.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Jubilee Action is a British independent charity, founded in 1992. It is a Christian-based human rights body that aims to protect 'children at risk' and persecuted families who suffer poverty and injustice. It works in around 18 countries worldwide, primarily with street children in Brazil, Guatemala, the Philippines and Thailand, with plans to launch new projects in India and Eastern Europe. Information source: interviews with Jubilee Action staff members at Guildford, 21/8/2006. For up-to-date information, see <http://www.jubileeeaction.co.uk/> accessed 4/1/2013.

<sup>53</sup> The acronym PREDA currently stands for People's Recovery Empowerment and Development Assistance. PREDA is a non-governmental organisation. Its work and programme for imprisoned children is described in 4.2.3. The decision to identify institutions was taken on the basis that most of them, the NGOs in particular, are already in the public arena and the main focus of the thesis is on processes of personal change within individual boys.

<sup>54</sup> Shay Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 69-83.

<sup>55</sup> The dearth of NGOs working in this field makes it difficult to find people with relevant information or the ability to execute research. See Cullen, et al. *kids behind bars*, 10. For a discussion of definitions and measurements of poverty, see Ruth Lister, *Poverty* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 12-50.

<sup>56</sup> See Cullen et al. *kids behind bars*, 69. For further details of imprisonment in the countries studied, see 5.3.2.

In all countries except Uganda, children were held captive in extremely poor conditions and without regard to their human rights or basic needs. Despite ratifying the CRC, many countries retained a low age of criminal responsibility.<sup>57</sup> Often, as in the Philippines, authorities failed to establish children's ages, holding them (some only nine years old) in adult jails both while awaiting trial and after sentencing. Elsewhere, laws, such as the Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act in India, allowed incarceration of minors. Most countries detained juveniles, even those accused of petty crimes, before conviction or sentencing, often for longer than the maximum penalty for the alleged crime.<sup>58</sup> High bail rates prevented poor children from avoiding pre-trial detention, sometimes for years. Children's families may not know what has happened to them or may simply be too poor to pay the required bail fees.

#### *Circumstances leading to imprisonment*

Street children live precarious lives, many hiding (as in Brazil's town sewers) to avoid capture by the authorities. Those caught may be charged with vagrancy, prostitution, theft of food or clothing, or possession of illegal substances. Police 'clear the streets' of children suffering poverty, abuse or homelessness, due to legislation that criminalises living on the streets, missing school, begging, and being homeless, mentally ill or 'vulnerable to delinquency'.<sup>59</sup> In the Philippines, children 'face harsh punishments for

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<sup>57</sup> For instance, Tanzania dropped it to 10 years; Burundi jails children even below its legal age of 13.

<sup>58</sup> *Pakistan: Denial of basic rights for child prisoners* (Amnesty International, 2003), 25. News Release issued by the International Secretariat of Amnesty International 23 October 2003.

<sup>59</sup> For example, in 2001, this accounted for 11,000 of the children arrested in Egypt. Source: 'Charged with being children', Egypt Report, Human Rights Watch, February 2003, cited in Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 75.



petty theft, substance abuse, begging and vagrancy.’<sup>60</sup> In South Africa, Muntingh reported a high percentage of property crime, which he claimed confirmed ‘common knowledge that many children are in custody as a result of poverty-driven crime.’<sup>61</sup>

Child prisoners usually come from poor families that live or work on the street, or they have left their family homes due to poverty, bereavement, neglect, abuse or exploitation and tried to fend for themselves. With little or no education, they steal in order to survive and use narcotic substances to dull their pain.<sup>62</sup> Many arrests in the Philippines have been for possessing or sniffing rugby, an industrial glue containing toluene.<sup>63</sup> Inhaled toluene ‘goes directly to the blood then flows through the brain, which causes damage to the nervous system.’<sup>64</sup> It depresses appetite<sup>65</sup> and alters mind and mood, resulting in confusion, disorientation and a distorted perception of time and depth and it stimulates violent behaviour and sexual urges, leading users to act abnormally. Long-term use damages the brain, kidneys and liver and causes muscle cramps, numbness and

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<sup>60</sup> Shay Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 76.

<sup>61</sup> Lukas Muntingh, ‘Update on Children in Prison’, *Nicrow, Article 40*, 5, no. 4 (2003), 14. Source: [www.communitylawcentre.org.za/](http://www.communitylawcentre.org.za/) accessed 4/2/2013.

<sup>62</sup> Shay Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 25.

<sup>63</sup> Toluene, also known as methylbenzene or phenylmethane, is a clear, water-insoluble liquid with the typical smell of paint thinners. It is widely used as an industrial feedstock and as a solvent and is a chemical classified under the 2002 Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act. Sniffing rugby is one of the most common ways by which toluene is abused. <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleid=468794> accessed 18/5/2009.

<sup>64</sup> Dr. Rustico Apolonio, technical administrator of the Cebu City Treatment and Rehabilitation Center. <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleid=468794> accessed 18/5/2009.

<sup>65</sup> This is one reason for its use by famished children.

abdominal pain, but regular users find it extremely hard to break their addiction.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Treatment of children in custody*

The rights of arrested children are often violated. There were extensive reports of abusive, degrading and violent treatment, frequent indiscriminate beatings, torture and killings in police custody, monetary extortion and sexual abuse. Illegal methods of restraint commonly included children being bound together with ropes, the indiscriminate use of handcuffs, chains and leg-irons and threats of violence.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Treatment of imprisoned children*

There were widespread reports of incarceration in extremely overcrowded and unsanitary cells without sufficient food, clean water, bedding or essential medical care. Imprisoned children are denied sleep, freedom, justice or physical activity. Unhealthy conditions and poor dietary standards promote the spread of infectious and contagious diseases and skin complaints. Some children die due to prison conditions.<sup>68</sup> Common findings were that child prisoners endured 'little opportunity for contact with the outside world and a complete lack of provision for schooling or vocational training.'<sup>69</sup> Many were jailed with adult criminals;<sup>70</sup> there was inter-gang violence within prisons, and rape

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleid=468794> accessed 18/5/2009.

<sup>67</sup> *Juvenile Justice*, A review of literature by Penal Reform International, 2000. Cited in Cullen et al. *kids behind bars*, 71.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2012.

<sup>69</sup> Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 73.

<sup>70</sup> Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 82.

or other abuse inflicted on children by adult inmates and prison guards.<sup>71</sup>

### *Alternatives to imprisonment for children*

Aside from human rights issues, the ineffectiveness, even counter-productiveness, of child imprisonment is evident. Minors in jail suffer abuse that makes them more angry, bitter and aggressive than before and they learn about criminality from other inmates. On leaving jail, their economical, physical and emotional state is usually even worse than before and they are likely to accept crime as a way of life. Imprisonment has done nothing to help them to change or to reduce criminal activity in society. It is clearly necessary to find ways of helping youngsters to effect transformation in their lives. Jubilee Action concluded its report by stating these priorities:<sup>72</sup>

- Put no children under the age of 15 in prison
- Use appropriate, therapeutic alternatives to prison
- Focus on prevention
- Improve the situation for children in closed situations.<sup>73</sup>

### *Rehabilitation of imprisoned children*

Whilst, internationally, some efforts are being made to create suitable alternatives to detention, numerous children still undergo, or have suffered, imprisonment. Many bear

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<sup>71</sup> Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 80.

<sup>72</sup> These are as laid out by Defence for Children International (DCI).  
<http://defenceforchildren.org/files/Kids-Behind-Bars.pdf> accessed 22/4/2013.

<sup>73</sup> Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 84.

physical and emotional scars of torture, abuse and neglect. They need therapeutic, restorative, holistic care to enable them to live the rest of their lives as ‘whole’ people in their society. Holistic care in this context involves physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social aspects. It includes counselling and activities designed to address and heal the emotional trauma of prison and the problems of family life. Physical restoration requires medical treatment, good nutrition, sports and physical exercise and training in personal health and hygiene. Spiritual development may depend partly upon the religious and cultural setting, but incorporates the experience of giving and receiving unconditional love and learning about moral values and the effects of one’s behaviour on others. Intellectual skills can be taught and should include vocational training as well as basic literacy, numeracy and other essential subjects, as well as life skills such as cooking, handling money and how to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation. Social skills can be developed in a small community group setting with the assistance of trained facilitators.

### **Section conclusion**

This section reflects a state of affairs in which children already in extreme poverty are imprisoned without trial and denied their basic rights. Employment and conditions of child imprisonment frequently contravene CRC requirements and some countries still impose death sentences or life imprisonment on minors. The main reasons appear to be ignorance of the law, lack of the will to change or implement policy, lack of resources and entrenched beliefs that offenders deserve no better treatment. In some places, matters are improving and alternatives to prison sentencing are being tried. To increase this effort requires advocacy, education and financial resources. In the Philippines, the

case study for this thesis, attempts are being made to improve jail conditions and establish rehabilitation centres but progress is slow. Some Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are pro-active and effective in this field. The general background of the Philippines, with reference to these issues, is explored in 1.2.2.

### **1.2.2. The Philippines**

This section contextualises the field research in the Philippines. It briefly summarises some geographical, historical, political and economic features of the country with reference to its current progress and difficulties and spotlights juvenile justice issues that relate to imprisoned children in the Philippines.

#### *Geographical features*

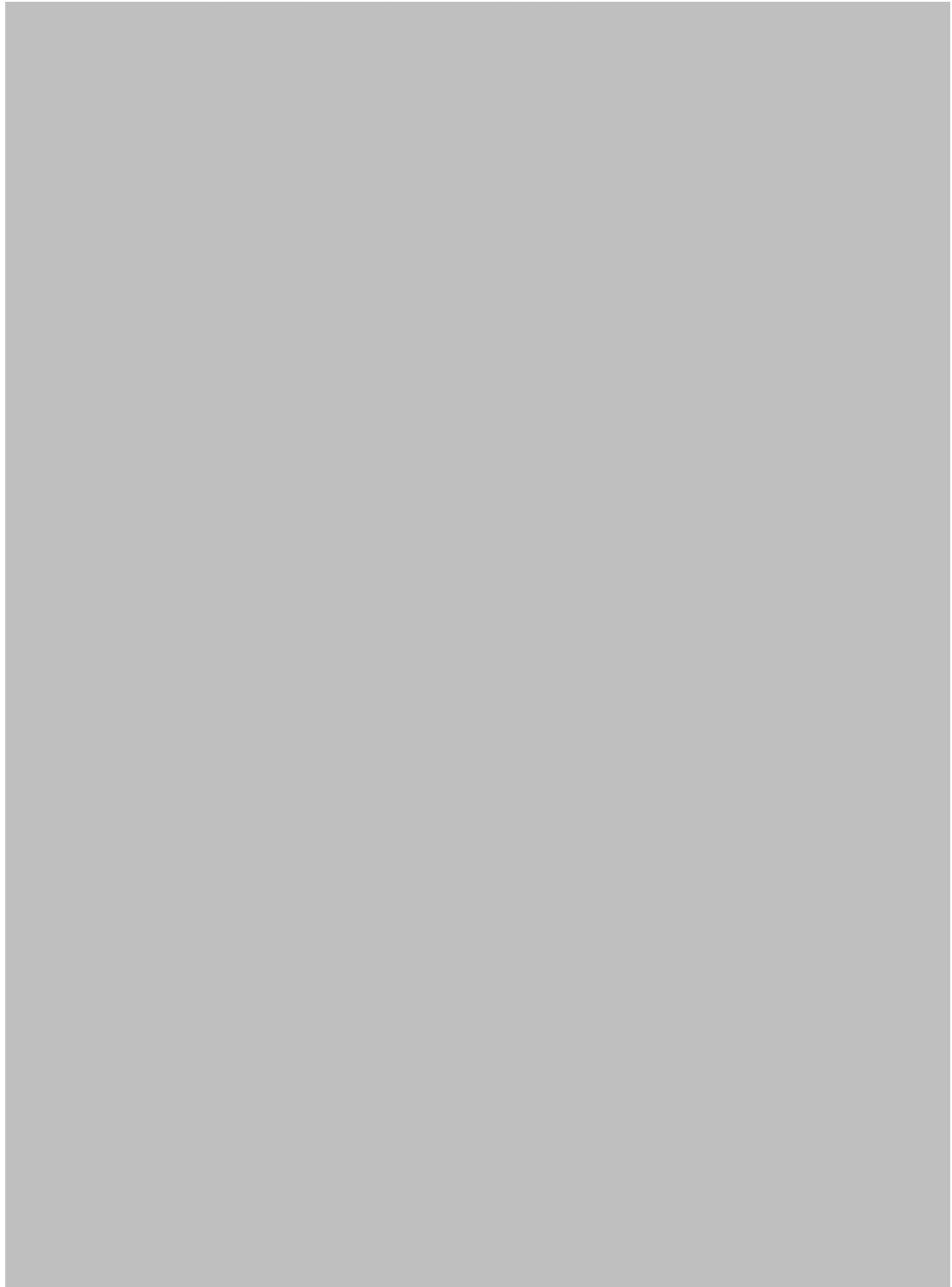
The Philippines is an archipelago of 7,107 islands, of which about 4,000 are inhabited.<sup>74</sup> Situated in south-east Asia, the country features rainforest and mountains, with lowland areas on the large islands of Luzon, in the north, and Mindanao, in the south.<sup>75</sup> The Philippines is prone to earthquakes and typhoons<sup>76</sup> but is endowed with natural resources and is rich in biodiversity. It has a tropical climate: the wet season brings heavy monsoons and severe storms, particularly in Luzon; in winter, most places are cooler and drier, whilst from March to May lowland areas become hot and dusty.

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<sup>74</sup> <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Asia-and-the-Pacific/Philippines.html> accessed 12/1/2011.

<sup>75</sup> Christine M. Halili, *Philippine History* (Manila: Rex Book Store, 2004), 23.

<sup>76</sup> In 1987 alone, the Department of Social Welfare and Development helped 2.4 million victims of natural disasters. <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Asia-and-the-Pacific/Philippines-BIBLIOGRAPHY.html> accessed 12/1/2011.



*Figure 1.1. Map of the Philippines<sup>77</sup>*

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<sup>77</sup> Not to scale. <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/tagalog/Philippines.GIF> University of Pennsylvania, accessed 12/2/2013.

About 1.6 million of the 88.6 million total population<sup>78</sup> live in or around the capital city, Manila, on the largely urbanised island of Luzon.<sup>79</sup> Most Filipinos originate from ethno-linguistic Austronesian or Malay ethnic groups. The median age of the population is 22 years, with children below 10 comprising the largest age group, followed by teenager groups.<sup>80</sup> The Tagalog-based Filipino language and English (the official language) are most widely spoken but around 170 distinct indigenous languages still exist.<sup>81</sup>

### *Historical and political background*

The Spanish captured Manila in 1571<sup>82</sup> and several centuries of imperial rule ensued.<sup>83</sup> The US took control in 1898 and, despite anti-colonial revolts,<sup>84</sup> and repeated Filipino pressure for independence,<sup>85</sup> remained<sup>86</sup> until 1954, when the US-dominated South East

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<sup>78</sup> [http://www.nscb.gov.ph/secstat/d\\_popn.asp](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/secstat/d_popn.asp) accessed 6/3/2011: this is the official site of the National Statistical Co-ordination Board.

<sup>79</sup> <http://census.gov.ph/data/census2007/index.html> accessed 6/3/2011.

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/pressrelease/2010/pr10162tx.html> accessed 15/1/2011.

<sup>81</sup> [http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_country.asp?name=PH](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=PH) accessed 6/3/2011. Some are recognised as regional official languages, whilst Spanish and Arabic are accepted as voluntary and optional languages in the constitution. Constitution of the Philippines: Article X IV Education, Science and Technology, Arts, Culture, and Sports accessed 6/3/2011. Chan Robles Virtual Law Library <http://www.chanrobles.com/philsupremelaw2.html> accessed 6/3/2011.

<sup>82</sup> Antonio de Morga, *The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan, and China, at the Close of the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2010), 18. (According to the original 1609 text, by Don Alonzo de Arellano, printed in Mexico and first published in English [translated from the Spanish] in 1838).

<sup>83</sup> Halili, *Philippine History*, 80.

<sup>84</sup> Halili, *Philippine History*, 273.

<sup>85</sup> Andrew Dalby, *South East Asia: Prince Charoon and others* (London: Haus Publishing, 2010), 39-59.

<sup>86</sup> Except for about two years of Japanese occupation.

Asian Treaty Organization was established.<sup>87</sup> US military bases appeared during the Cold War period and stayed until 1992. Native communist movements fought against colonial rule and continued with ‘insurgency and guerrilla activity’<sup>88</sup> as the NPA fought on against class inequities.<sup>89</sup> Mindanao, in particular, continues in a state of unrest due to ‘insurgent groups seeking to establish Islamic or communist states.’<sup>90</sup> Late 20th century Philippine politics have been characterised by instability and corruption.<sup>91</sup>

### *Economic factors*

In recent years, the major industries have been agriculture, chemicals, fishing, food processing, forestry, mining and textiles. Natural resources enable trade in abaca, bananas, chrome, coal, coconuts, coffee, copper, fish, gold, iron, maize, nickel, pineapples, rice, rubber, sugar cane, timber and tobacco. The main exports are clothing, coconut oils, electronic goods, fruit and vegetables, metal ores, sugar and timber, but there are constant issues regarding exploitation by foreign companies and the marginalisation of indigenous tribes, who have lost land or been moved to less productive plots by successive governments. Similar problems apply to the fishing industry, and the destruction of natural mangrove areas and the once extensive

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<sup>87</sup> Halili, *Philippine History*, 259.

<sup>88</sup> Halili, *Philippine History*, 311.

<sup>89</sup> Halili, *Philippine History*, 311. NPA stands for New People’s Army, the armed wing of the communist party in the Philippines.

<sup>90</sup> Zoher Abdoolcarim, *The Philippines’ Terrorist Refuge* [article online] <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,423565,00.html#ixzz1B6oON9K3> accessed 15/1/2011.

<sup>91</sup> Source: U.S. Library of Congress. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Philippines.pdf> accessed 15/1/2011.



rainforest.<sup>92</sup> Though rich in natural resources, the Philippines has suffered economically and a wide gulf has developed between a wealthy elite and extremely poor sectors of the community.<sup>93</sup>

### *Social factors*

Christianity, specifically Roman Catholicism, is the main religion.<sup>94</sup> Other religions include Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. The Catholic church is active in politics: bishops and priests, in particular, can influence government policy.<sup>95</sup> There is significant under-nourishment and 3.2% infant mortality.<sup>96</sup> In 2011, the mean years of schooling recorded for current adults was 8.7 years, the adult literacy rate was 93.7% and enrolment in education was 79.6%. Income indicators feature inequality and poverty (12.6% of population) and a high unemployment rate (7.4%). The country ranks below the regional average of East Asia and the Pacific.<sup>97</sup> This profile and low ranking identify economic and social problems but perhaps mask the great inequality of population sectors in terms of well-being and life chances. For instance, many have little or no

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<sup>92</sup> Charlie Pye-Smith, *The Philippines: In Search of Justice* (Oxford: Oxfam, 1997), 15-31.

<sup>93</sup> John Ravenhill, *Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The Political Economy of East Asia*, Vol. I. (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1995), xxiii.

<sup>94</sup> For example, interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>95</sup> Source: U.S. Library of Congress. <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/78.htm> accessed 15/1/2011.

<sup>96</sup> Human Development Index published by the United Nations Development Programme <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi> accessed 15/1/2011. The annual HDI employs international statistics in three areas of human development: health, education and income.

<sup>97</sup> Philippines Country profile of Human Development Indicators, published in the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 2011. [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2011\\_EN\\_Tables.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Tables.pdf) accessed 6/3/2011.

education, no employment or adequate health care.<sup>98</sup>

### *Human rights record*

A 2011 report on the Philippines drew attention to its security and social problems.<sup>99</sup>

Although recent elections were considered ‘largely free and fair’ they were ‘marred by violence’, including dozens of killings. Positive points were ‘an elected president and legislature, a thriving civil society sector, and a vibrant media’ but ‘several key institutions, including law enforcement agencies and the justice system, remain weak and the military and police commit human rights violations with impunity.’<sup>100</sup> There is continued armed conflict in Mindanao, with military clashes between government forces and the communist NPA. The employment of torture by police officers, contravening the 2009 Anti-Torture Act, remains a matter of concern and ‘death squads’ operating in several cities ‘continued to target alleged petty criminals, drug dealers, gang members, and street children.’<sup>101</sup>

### *Juvenile justice*

Prior to 2006, children from nine years of age could be arrested and detained in jail with

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<sup>98</sup> Philippines Country profile of Human Development Indicators published in the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 2011. [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR\\_2011\\_EN\\_Tables.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Tables.pdf) accessed 6/3/2011.

<sup>99</sup> The Human Rights Watch World Report 2011: *The Philippines* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2011). <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2011/philippines> accessed 6/3/2011.

<sup>100</sup> The Human Rights Watch World Report 2011: *The Philippines* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2011). <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2011/philippines> accessed 6/3/2011.

<sup>101</sup> The Human Rights Watch World Report 2011: *The Philippines* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2011). <http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2011/philippines> accessed 6/3/2011.

adults. In 2005, over 4,000 children were estimated to be in jails and detention centres in the Philippines.<sup>102</sup> Accused of minor crimes, such as petty theft, sniffing solvents and vagrancy, most still awaited court hearings and might be imprisoned for longer than the maximum sentence for the alleged crime.<sup>103</sup> The abuse they suffered inside detention centres and prisons often led to permanent damage.<sup>104</sup>

In 2005, a Juvenile Justice Network was formed by the PREDA Foundation and other organisations to advocate for changes in justice and penal systems.<sup>105</sup> Against ‘indifference from police, jail officers, judges, government officials and the general public’, the Network exposed the conditions for children in Philippine jails and showed the benefits of a rehabilitation programme.<sup>106</sup> By raising global awareness, the members applied pressure on the government to act and the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act 2006 (RA9344) finally became law.

RA9344 raised the age of criminal responsibility from nine to fifteen years of age and exempted children aged 15-18 years from criminal liability, except where the prosecution could prove they acted with discernment. The intention was to establish a comprehensive juvenile justice and welfare system based on restorative justice principles

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<sup>102</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/philippines\\_30525.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/philippines_30525.html) accessed 23/11/2012.

<sup>103</sup> PREDA internal documentation, February 2008.

<sup>104</sup> PREDA internal documentation, February 2008.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with Jubilee Action staff member, Jubilee Action headquarters, Guildford, 14/08/2006.

<sup>106</sup> Shay Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 26, 36-7.

rather than punishment. Children should no longer be jailed but local authorities are required to provide juvenile delinquency prevention programmes, as well as rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare services for young offenders.<sup>107</sup> CICL should ‘undergo diversion programs without undergoing court proceedings’, except where ‘the imposable penalty for the crime committed exceeds six years imprisonment’, in which case ‘diversion measures may be resorted to only by the court.’<sup>108</sup> Normal procedure should be to ‘conduct mediation, family conferencing and conciliation’ and ‘adopt indigenous modes of conflict resolution in accordance with the best interest of the child’ in order to accomplish ‘the objectives of restorative justice and the formulation of a diversion program.’<sup>109</sup>

Despite these efforts, RA9344 has not yet eradicated child imprisonment. Children transferred from adult jails are still incarcerated behind bars with little meaningful activity or means of rehabilitation into their family or community. Unless someone assists children at every stage of the legal proceedings, their rights are frequently violated. Family Court judges prompted to apply restorative justice find there is often nowhere suitable to assign them. Nearly two years after this statute was passed, my research revealed that few places had government-run centres and that some penal institutions, renamed rehabilitation centres in lip-service to RA9344, continued to hold children in prison-like conditions.

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<sup>107</sup> RA9344 Section 23. System of Diversion.

<sup>108</sup> RA9344 Section 23. System of Diversion.

<sup>109</sup> RA9344 Section 23. System of Diversion.

## **Conclusion**

Whilst many Filipinos live in relatively good social conditions, a significant number exist in extreme poverty without adequate housing, food, clothing, education, employment, health care or access to justice. As Pete Alcock observes, ‘the experience of poor people extends beyond reliance simply on an inadequate income, it also includes a multifaceted combination of deprivations and unmet needs that prevent them from participating in society’ as others do.<sup>110</sup> Many families have migrated from rural areas because they were unable to earn a living but find themselves living in makeshift housing by railway tracks, on river banks, in the city streets or on rubbish dumps. Social services are severely stretched due to insufficient government funding or trained social workers and there are insufficient resources to give poor people access to human rights lawyers or other basic forms of justice. Insurrection is rife in some parts of the country and human rights abuses abound. Improved juvenile legislation is being enforced too slowly. It is against this background of deprivation that children are taken to prison and remain there without legal trial or provision of their basic needs.

### **1.2.3. Prisons and rehabilitation centres as organisations**

This section discusses the prisons, governmental rehabilitation centres and NGO rehabilitation centres in terms of building design, aims of the organisation, levels of observation and control, power, authority and morality.

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<sup>110</sup> Pete Alcock, *Understanding Poverty*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1997), 85.

### *Organisational aims*

The manner of organisation that is established or that develops over time is largely dictated by its aims. Likewise, its ethos affects recruitment processes and consequently the personnel working in the establishment and the provision and nature of staff training. The institutions investigated for this thesis have non-commercial aims and objectives. Their intention is not to make a financial profit, although they do have to work within (sometimes tightly restricted) budget constraints.

In jails, the general aims, though not openly displayed, appeared to be containment, punishment and survival.<sup>111</sup> The ostensible aims, displayed since the law mandated changes, are not implemented in practice, resulting in a kind of double-dealing, as discussed by Yiannis Gabriel, Stephen Fineman and David Sims.<sup>112</sup> Below the surface, one soon finds that managers have conflicting aims,<sup>113</sup> that staff members hold personal values at variance with the stated aims<sup>114</sup> and that some personal opinions of workers contradict the law on which their actions should be based.<sup>115</sup> In addition, staff members have inadequate or unsuitable training to uphold the aims.<sup>116</sup> They continue to act

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<sup>111</sup> Field notes, CRADLE, 12/2/2008; CCOSCC, 22/2/2008; Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008; Butuan Regional Jail, 5/3/2008, These features are described in 3.1.

<sup>112</sup> Yiannis Gabriel, Stephen Fineman and David Sims, *Organizing and Organizations* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Sage 2000), 38-39.

<sup>113</sup> Interview with Executive Director, Cebu City Commission for the Welfare and Protection of Children (CCCWPC), 22/02/2008.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with a staff member 22/2/2008.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with a staff member 22/2/2008.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with a staff member 26/2/2008.

according to the ethos of a jail.<sup>117</sup> They are concerned for their own welfare in an uncaring system, of which they may not even have volunteered to be a part,<sup>118</sup> but which they perpetuate by continuing to treat their young charges with an impersonal lack of care and, at times, by inflicting on them hardship, violence or cruelty.<sup>119</sup>

### *Design of institutional buildings*

The design of a building both reflects and influences the organisation of an institution that inhabits it. In the late 18th century, Jeremy Bentham designed a ‘panopticon’ building, intended for institutions, such as prisons, hospitals, schools and asylums. It allowed unseen observation of all prison inmates and was described as a new mode of obtaining power.<sup>120</sup> A central observation tower was surrounded by tiers of individual cells, separated from one another by solid partitions and barred like cages, but otherwise completely open to the central space. Its fame is largely due to Michel Foucault’s employment of the term ‘panopticism’, deriving from this panopticon design, as a metaphor for power and control in ‘disciplinary’ society.<sup>121</sup> Gabriel et al. observe that Foucault, with regard to the asylum, prison, clinic, army and school ‘argued that these institutions signal the arrival of a new type of control over the masses, a form of control

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<sup>117</sup> See description of CRADLE in 3.1.1.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with a staff member 25/2/2008.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with a group of boys, 26/2/2008.

<sup>120</sup> Jeremy Bentham, ‘Panopticon’, in Miran Bozovic ed., *The Panopticon Writings* (London: Verso: 1995), 29-95. <http://cartome.org/panopticon2.htm> accessed 01/11/2012.

<sup>121</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 195-210. The first translated edition of this work was published in 1977.

pervasive enough to be absorbed into each and every individual's subjectivity.'<sup>122</sup>

Foucault contends that the architecture and design of buildings has a profound effect on what takes place inside them. The authorities

project the subtle segmentations of discipline onto the confused space of internment, combine it with the methods of analytical distribution proper to power, individualize the excluded, but use procedures of individualization to mark exclusion – this is what is operated regularly by disciplinary power from the beginning of the nineteenth century in the psychiatric asylum, the penitentiary, the reformatory, the approved school and, to some extent, the hospital.<sup>123</sup>

Panopticism is a form of power by constant observation, or at least the threat of potential observation at any time. The 'dorms' in which boys live in CRADLE and the cells at Butuan Regional Jail are of comparable design, though without the central tower.<sup>124</sup> Any person in the wide corridor at CRADLE, or in the compound at Butuan, can see the entirety of each cell and the activities of its occupants. Boys are not normally isolated in these cells;<sup>125</sup> they have the company of other boys but never any privacy. At other jails, there is a similarly high level of observation or potential for observation at any moment. Solitary confinement is still utilised as an extra punishment for prison rule breakers.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Gabriel et al., *Organizing and Organizations*, 37.

<sup>123</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Part 3, Chapter 3. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1977), 3.

<sup>124</sup> Field notes, 12/02/2008 and 26/02/2008.

<sup>125</sup> Field notes, 12/02/2008 and 26/02/2008.

<sup>126</sup> Field notes, CCOSCC 22/02/2008.



### *Power, control and authority*

Power in prison resides with the authority, which can appoint staff members without their consent and set rigid conditions, sometimes without training or support, inflicting punishment on those who fail to keep them.<sup>127</sup> This results in excessive power and control being passed down the line.<sup>128</sup> At all prisons and rehabilitation centres, there are systems of control, both physical and psychological. An examination of disciplinary measures shows patent differences,<sup>129</sup> the most obvious being the use or non-use of physical violence. Inmates, or previous inmates, of the first three jails visited reported beatings and acts of physical cruelty as punishment for breaking rules or trying to escape – or simply as a ‘welcome’ to the institution, presumably to establish tight control from the outset and thereby deter them from doing either.<sup>130</sup>

Governmental and non-governmental rehabilitation centres are notably different in design from the jail-like establishments. Though deliberately simple in architecture and furnishings, the centres aim to be homely, free places where residents can move from room to room or make use of the outside space without locked doors or gates and without constant supervision or observation.

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<sup>127</sup> Interview with a staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>128</sup> For instance, in this case, boys are locked into their cells before nightfall to prevent them from absconding. In the Philippines, nightfall occurs around 5.30 p.m. throughout the year.

<sup>129</sup> These are described under the heading of ‘discipline’ in each section of 3.1.

<sup>130</sup> Documented in 3.1.1.b) and 3.2.2.

### *Models of institutions for CICL*

The prisons visited for this study could be said to operate on a *minimum care with maximum control and containment model*, based on the desire for a level of observation and control as expressed in the ‘panopticon’ design. In this thesis, this organisational type is termed the *Containment* model because this appears to be the main aim of the prison.

Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Youth have a more moderate level of observation and control, which is here termed a *Boundaried Care* model. This involves both restricted freedom (allowing a sense of freedom with imposed restrictions) and caring authority (evident control coupled with genuine care). There is containment within physical exterior boundaries, without constant exposure but with a high level of attention. The lifestyle is based on a family model, founded on a premise that responsible parents and guardians know and care where their teenage children are and what they are doing, although this may be something that the young residents have not previously experienced.

Leaders are cautious about trust: outings are limited to those who have earned trust and proved themselves reliable and beyond the gates boys are accompanied at all times.<sup>131</sup> As in prisons, power rests with the authority, but staff members are treated with respect and friendship and the Head of Center has a degree of professional autonomy, affording

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<sup>131</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

the opportunity to establish a positive atmosphere in which a multi-disciplinary team can work together to maintain a constructive programme and a rich quality of life for everyone in the community.<sup>132</sup>

In the NGO rehabilitation centres, leaders hold authority over both staff members and residents. This may be exercised strictly or informally but obedience is both expected and achieved. The focus is mainly on training and counselling. As Gabriel et al. observe:

‘Empowerment’ has replaced control as a management buzz word. This does not mean that control has faded away or that organizational rules and discipline have been replaced by trust and autonomy. It does mean, however, that many organizations seek to complement bureaucratic regulations with subtler forms of organizational control.<sup>133</sup>

There are always rules to be obeyed and, in general, these do not differ much from one institution to another. There may be even more clearly stated rules in the centres where there is more freedom because there is more scope for initiative. For instance, in PREDA there is a ban on bringing in any knives, sharp objects or coat hangers. Boys who are allowed to go out could feasibly obtain these, whereas boys locked in prison cells would be frisked on entry and never see such objects again before release.

Rehabilitation centre residents report non-violent penalties for misdemeanours.

Punishment generally consists of extra domestic chores but emphasis is placed on

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<sup>132</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>133</sup> Gabriel et al., *Organizing and Organizations*, 35.

counselling the child, teaching him why certain standards of behaviour are important and explaining how to resolve conflicts with others without resort to fighting.

Gabriel et al. discuss the moral aspects of organisations:

Some organizations pride themselves on their respect for human rights, for the environment, for the rights of minorities, and so forth. Such organizations may attract public attention, as journalists, politicians and academics test the strength of their claims, especially when they clash with harsh financial realities. Other organizations may institutionalize the turning of a blind eye, disregarding what they view as moral niceties.<sup>134</sup>

The three NGO rehabilitation centres visited base their work on a morality of respect for human rights and for child rights. This affects attitudes to both staff and children but strict penalties such as dismissal would be imposed on staff members who abused children in any way. Training and support structures are established so that adults can deal appropriately with difficult situations. These organisations are based on what I term a *Developing Trust model*. The relationship between staff members and boys is based on trust: staff members are trustworthy and exhibit trust in the boys so that boys are enabled to develop trust in others and in themselves, and thus to become trustworthy members of the community. Care is genuine and therapy is holistic. Maximum liberty is allowed within the constraints of the law for CICL:

It's a very risky programme in that it does not lock up the boys as the Government does, denying that it imprisons them but keeping them in buildings with high

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<sup>134</sup> Gabriel et al., *Organizing and Organizations*, 55.

windows, bars and high fences. The PREDA centre is open; boys are free to run around. They learn that they are trusted to act responsibly.<sup>135</sup>

Boys know that individual attention is at a high level, their behaviour is observed and changes are recorded. Behaviour modification in the form of counselling, emotional therapy and a full programme of activities, including spiritual enrichment, is given priority over a punishment response to undesirable behaviour. Every resident is allowed to go out, to school, college or employment if appropriate and on frequent outings, where presence by staff members, even when not officially on duty, gives rise to a high staff-pupil ratio. This environment supports 'their values formation and their spiritual wellbeing', enabling them to lead more dignified and decent lives.<sup>136</sup> Boys also learn respect for others and their material property and the environment.

### **Section conclusion**

In this section, the residential institutions for CICL from which data were collected have been scrutinised in terms of organisational type. The terms original to this thesis for organisational models of institutions for CICL (*Containment*, *Boundaried Care* and *Developing Trust*) are used in this thesis in a descriptive manner, to aid the analysis and interpretation of the data. They reflect the situation as it was observed but are not immutable or mutually exclusive. The ways in which these types affect opportunities for spiritual transformation are developed in 5.1.

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<sup>135</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>136</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

#### 1.2.4. Children and spirituality

Past research relating to children has focused on religious experience rather than on spiritual growth. This section outlines the major features of this research, as the focus shifted slightly from theories of religiosity towards a growing interest in the sociology of religion and in children's 'spirituality'. It draws attention to the inclusion of the 'spiritual' as an element of global recognition of the human rights of children. It briefly links each aspect of this field to the subject of this thesis. Most research has separated the two age groups of childhood and adolescence: David Hay, Rebecca Nye and Roger Murphy, for instance, defined 'children' as being of 'primary age'<sup>137</sup> whilst Savage et al. interviewed 15-25 year-olds.<sup>138</sup> In this thesis, all legal minors are termed 'children' but, in practice, most of the imprisoned or ex-prison boys who contributed to the research data for this thesis were at the time teenagers.

#### *Religious belief*

Aspects of children's religiosity were identified, and analysed according to gender differences, in a longitudinal study of schoolchildren by Kalevi Tamminen, in Finland. There were found to be 'clear differences in the religious emphases of girls and boys':<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> David Hay, Rebecca Nye and Roger Murphy, 'Thinking about childhood spirituality: review of research and current directions', in Leslie J. Francis, William K Kay and William S. Campbell, eds. *Research in Religious Education* (Leominster: Gracewing 1996), 65.

<sup>138</sup> Sara Savage, Sylvia Collins-Mayo, Bob Mayo with Graham Cray, *Making Sense of Generation Y: The World View of 15-25-year-olds*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), 3.

<sup>139</sup> Kalevi Tamminen, 'Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents', in Leslie J. Francis, William K Kay and William S. Campbell, eds, *Research in Religious Education* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1996), 183.

boys were less likely to engage in prayer,<sup>140</sup> report experiences of God's nearness,<sup>141</sup> to trust in God,<sup>142</sup> or correctly interpret parables,<sup>143</sup> but they scored higher on 'non-literal interpretation of the Bible'<sup>144</sup> and 'choosing God's greatness and powerfulness for the best characteristic of God.'<sup>145</sup> Girls tended to emphasise God as giving security, forgiving wrongdoing and having 'ethical influence'.<sup>146</sup>

Tamminen also notes differences in 'the way religiosity is expressed', with girls being more 'emotionally attuned' and more 'internal'. Christian Smith and Melinda Denton, in USA, also found gender differences, with girls scoring slightly higher on all religiosity variables: religious service attendance, importance of religious faith shaping daily life, having made a personal commitment to live life for God, current involvement in a religious youth group, frequency of praying alone and feeling close to God.<sup>147</sup> This thesis focuses on the spiritual development of boys because the majority of children found in the prisons and rehabilitation centres were male.

Cairns argues that 'the search for meaning and direction is of critical concern for

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<sup>140</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 167.

<sup>141</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 168.

<sup>142</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 170.

<sup>143</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 172.

<sup>144</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 173.

<sup>145</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 174-76.

<sup>146</sup> Tamminen, *Gender differences in religiosity in children and adolescents*, 174.

<sup>147</sup> Christian Smith with Melinda L. Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), Appendix A, 277, 279.

children<sup>148</sup> and that ‘resilience and recovery is contributed to by religious faith’,<sup>149</sup> whilst Jean Clinton<sup>150</sup> affirms the central importance of the existence of hope and a sense of meaning in life. These themes all relate to the subject of rehabilitation as discussed in this thesis.<sup>151</sup>

### *Spirituality and identity*

Whilst there has been continuing interest in the religious beliefs of young people,<sup>152</sup> there has also been growth in academic studies into spirituality and identity. Michael Ungar, describing identity as a resource related to well-being, defines it as: ‘A personal and collective sense of who one is that fuels feelings of satisfaction and/or pride; sense of purpose to one’s life; self-appraisal of strengths and weaknesses; aspirations; beliefs and values; spiritual and religious identification.’<sup>153</sup> Susan Jones and Leslie Francis, on finding a small but significant correlation between religiosity and self-esteem, conclude this is ‘consistent with the view that Christianity promotes a positive view of self during childhood and adolescence rather than detracts from a positive view of self.’<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Kate Cairns, ‘Climate for learning’, *Social Work Today* 21, no. 38 (1990), 27.

<sup>149</sup> Cairns, *Surviving paedophilia*, 93.

<sup>150</sup> Jean Clinton, ‘Resilience and recovery’, *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 13, no. 3 (2008): 213-222.

<sup>151</sup> See 4.3, 4.4. and 5.1.

<sup>152</sup> For example, Bernadette O’Keeffe, ‘Christian children at school: their religious beliefs and practices’ in Leslie J. Francis, William K Kay and William S. Campbell, eds, *Research in Religious Education* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1996).

<sup>153</sup> Michael Ungar, *Counseling in Challenging Contexts: Working with Individuals and Families across Clinical and Community Settings* (Belmont, CA: Books/Cole, Cengage Learning, 2010), 52, Table 03-02.

<sup>154</sup> Susan H. Jones and Leslie Francis, ‘Religiosity and self-esteem during childhood and adolescence’



Collins-Mayo et al.<sup>155</sup> studied, over a five year period, young people across England who had Christian connections but rarely went to church – in order to discover their ‘Christian consciousness’<sup>156</sup> interest, social influences and effects of theology and religion on their lives.<sup>157</sup> They found that: ‘for the most part, family, friends and self are the central axes of meaning, hope and purpose’ that enable young people to ‘get on with the business of daily living.’<sup>158</sup> They termed this ‘immanent faith’, and showed how it incorporates a sense of self and a sense of belonging.<sup>159</sup> However, many of the same teenagers appreciated the guidelines for living provided within the Christian faith.<sup>160</sup>

Savage et al. conducted small group interviews with 124 people aged between 15 and 25 in English colleges, universities and youth clubs. From their data regarding the nature of young people’s worldview and spirituality, they distinguished between two types of spirituality: ‘formative’ and ‘transformative’.<sup>161</sup> ‘Formative spirituality’ incorporated aspects that were coded as indications of a ‘search for meaning’, examples of ‘existential questioning’ and expressions of ‘awe, delight, dread’, whereas ‘transformative

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in Leslie J. Francis, William K. Kay and William S. Campbell, eds, *Research in Religious Education* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1996), 200.

<sup>155</sup> Sylvia Collins-Mayo, Bob Mayo, Sally Nash and Christopher Cocksworth, *The Faith of Generation Y* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006).

<sup>156</sup> Collins-Mayo et al., *The Faith of Generation Y*, 29.

<sup>157</sup> Collins-Mayo et al., *The Faith of Generation Y*, 83.

<sup>158</sup> Collins-Mayo et al., *The Faith of Generation Y*, 84.

<sup>159</sup> Collins-Mayo et al., *The Faith of Generation Y*, 33-37.

<sup>160</sup> Collins-Mayo et al., *The Faith of Generation Y*, 88.

<sup>161</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 12.

spirituality’ included ‘talk of religion as meaningful’ and evidence of ‘regular spiritual practices’.<sup>162</sup> They found that, in general, the worldview of these young people was focused on the family and peer group, in what they termed a ‘happy midi-narrative’ and religious themes such as ‘God and sin’ and ‘fear of death’ were conspicuously absent from the narrative, along with anticipated concerns of ‘romance and sexual fulfilment, achievement and structural inequalities.’<sup>163</sup>

Savage et al. highlight the ‘biblical illiteracy’ of this generation of young people and conclude that:

Telling Generation Y what to believe will not work. Telling them the Christian story in a way that raises questions about their own story is an important skill. Jesus [*sic*] use of parables provides an important model, as does his patience with the disciples, when they were slow to understand. Through this patience, the disciples grew to a point where they were capable of grasping the truth at a more profound level.<sup>164</sup>

They advise ‘starting where young people are’ in order to help them to articulate their own questions and to ‘focus on character and the formation of identity’,<sup>165</sup> which, ‘The Christian tradition directly links ... to spirituality and worship. Character questions form an identifiable bridge between formative and transformative spirituality.’<sup>166</sup> Whilst the

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<sup>162</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 12-13, 101.

<sup>163</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 43.

<sup>164</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 158.

<sup>165</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 162.

<sup>166</sup> Savage et al., *Making Sense of Generation Y*, 163.

setting and the culture are different, these strategies advocated by Savage et al. are similar to those practised in the Philippines NGO rehabilitation centres observed for this study.<sup>167</sup>

### *Children's spiritual rights*

It has been increasingly recognised that children are entitled to spiritual and religious nurture as well as physical and cognitive care. The CRC declares that, 'States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.'<sup>168</sup> It also asserts that:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.<sup>169</sup>

In the Philippines, this entitlement is enshrined in law with statements of policy to be 'observed at all times' such as: 'The State recognizes the vital role of children and youth in nation building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being.' This includes those who have broken the law.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> See 4.3.

<sup>168</sup> The Convention for the Rights of the Child Article 27.  
[http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp#Twenty\\_seven](http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp#Twenty_seven) accessed 9/3/2012.

<sup>169</sup> The Convention for the Rights of the Child Article 32.  
[http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp#Twenty\\_seven](http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp#Twenty_seven) accessed 9/3/2012.

<sup>170</sup> Philippines 2006 RA9344 Section 52: Rehabilitation of Children in Conflict with the Law.

Under the supervision and guidance of the LSWDO,<sup>171</sup> and in coordination with his/her parents or guardian, the child in conflict with the law shall participate in community-based programs, which shall include, but are not limited to:

- a) Competency and life skills development
- b) Socio-cultural and recreational activities
- c) Community volunteer projects
- d) Leadership training
- e) Social services
- f) Homelife services
- g) Health services
- h) Spiritual enrichment
- i) Community and family welfare services
- j) Continuing education programs.

The Education Reform Act (England & Wales) 1988 requires that schools ‘must have a balanced and broadly based curriculum’ that ‘promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils’, but no mention is made of the ‘spiritual’ in the Children Act 2004,<sup>172</sup> an outcome of government papers entitled ‘Every Child Matters’. This initiative emphasised the need for government and voluntary agencies to work co-operatively in the interests of the well-being of every child, in relation to:

- a) physical and mental and emotional well-being
- b) protection from harm and neglect

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<sup>171</sup> LSWDO stands for the Local Social Work District Office.

<sup>172</sup> Children Act 2004 Section 10:2 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/section/10> accessed 5/3/2012.

- c) education, training and recreation
- d) the contribution made by them to society
- e) social and economic well-being.

Jacqueline Watson specifically addresses this omission of spiritual rights. She sees that, 'greater integration does have real potential for a holistic approach that could improve individual children's overall physical and emotional well-being.' She welcomes the 'increasing commitment to child-centred, ecological and developmental approaches to children's care in social and health care' and values the intention to extend this to the education curriculum.<sup>173</sup> However, her view is that, if we believe that addressing children's spiritual rights is about more than 'changing pedagogical values to attend to the well-being of the whole child', we might want to give the policy 'a more cautious welcome.'<sup>174</sup>

#### *Focus on children's spirituality*

Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, children's spirituality, as opposed to the study of religious experience, became a recognised subject of academic interest,<sup>175</sup> with significant changes in direction and methodology towards understanding more about

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<sup>173</sup> Jacqueline Watson, 'Every Child Matters and children's spiritual rights: does the new holistic approach to children's care address children's spiritual well-being?' *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 11, no. 2 (2006): 255.

<sup>174</sup> Watson, 'Every Child Matters and children's spiritual rights' 253-254.

<sup>175</sup> Hay, Nye and Murphy, 'Thinking about childhood spirituality', 47.

children's spirituality<sup>176</sup> and there is now a wealth of literature on this subject.<sup>177</sup> A more holistic view of the spirituality of children and adolescents,<sup>178</sup> which embraces affective as well as cognitive elements, emerged. Margaret Crompton, for example, states that, 'Spiritual wellbeing is inseparable from cognitive, emotional, physical and social wellbeing. If one aspect is neglected or harmed, the whole person may be impaired.'<sup>179</sup> Alongside this development, religion and spirituality have become progressively recognised in the fields of cognitive psychology,<sup>180</sup> psychoanalysis,<sup>181</sup> child therapy<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Margaret Crompton, 'Working with children', in Fran Gale, Natalie Bolzan and Dorothy. McRae-McMahon, eds, *Spirited Practices: Spirituality and the Helping Professions* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin 2007), 84.

<sup>177</sup> Further recent developments in this field can be found by referring to the following: Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde and Richard Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2008); Michael Anthony, ed., *Perspectives on Children's Spiritual Formation: Four Views* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2007); Elisabeth Arweck, "I've been christened, but I don't really believe in it": How Young People Articulate their (Non)-Religious Identities and Perceptions of (Non)-Belief', in Abby Day, Giselle Vincett and Christopher Cotter, eds, *Social Identities Between the Sacred and the Secular* (Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013); Peter Benson, Eugene Roehlkepartain and K. Hong, eds, *New Directions for Youth Development: Spiritual Development* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008); Sylvia Collins-Mayo and Pink Dandelion, eds, *Religion and Youth* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Abby Day, 'Researching Belief Without Asking Religious Questions', *Fieldwork in Religion* 4, no. 1 (2009): 86-104; Abby Day, 'Believing in Belonging: an Ethnography of Young People's Constructions of Belief', *Culture and Religion* 10, no. 3 (2009): 263-278; Abby Day, 'Believing in Belonging: An Exploration of Young People's Social Contexts in Constructions of Belief', in Sylvia Collins-Mayo and Pink Dandelion, eds, *Religion and Youth* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010): 97-104; Abby Day, *Believing in Belonging: Belief and Social Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jane Erricker, Cathy Ota and Clive Erricker, *Spiritual Education: Cultural, Religious and Social Differences* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001); David Hay and Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2006); Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Pamela Ebstye King, Linda Wagener and Peter L. Benson, eds, *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006).

<sup>178</sup> For example, Sylvia Collins-Mayo, 'Young People's Spirituality and the Meaning of Prayer', in Abby Day, ed., *Religion and the Individual* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 33-45.

<sup>179</sup> Crompton, 'Working with children', 84.

<sup>180</sup> Sandra Bosacki, "'Theory of mind" or "Theory of the Soul?" The Role of Spirituality in Children's Understanding of Minds and Emotions', in Jane Erricker, Cathy Ota and Clive Erricker, eds, *Spiritual Education* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001), 156 – 169. See also David Fontana, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality* (Oxford: BPS Blackwell, 2003); Roehlkepartain et al., *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*.

<sup>181</sup> Symington and Stokes, *Emotion & Spirit*.

and psychosocial development.<sup>183</sup>

The notion of holistic care for children and themes such as ‘the education of the whole child’<sup>184</sup> have brought to the fore the need for spiritual and moral aspects of child development to be recognised and incorporated into the curriculum for children and young people. This thesis rests firmly on a holistic view of children’s spiritual development that could be assisted by the practical employment of these related disciplines incorporated into a programme of overall care and nurture.

Rebecca Nye and David Hay have made a considerable contribution to the field during this period. In their analysis of the data from interviews with children aged six and ten years old, using four major dimensions of spiritual experience, i.e. awareness, mystery, value sensing and meaning making, they discover ways in which spirituality is expressed verbally and symbolically.<sup>185</sup> Spiritual development may depend partly upon the religious and cultural setting, but it is significantly affected by features of an individual’s experience, such as a sense of security, giving and receiving love, praise and recognition, play and exploration, opportunities for internal reflection, and participation

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<sup>182</sup> Robert Coles, *The Spiritual Life of Children* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1990).

<sup>183</sup> Cynthia K. Dixon, ‘Who Nurtured the Child? Without Attachment there can be no Intimacy’ in Jane Erricker, Cathy Ota, and Clive Erricker, eds, *Spiritual Education* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001), 48 – 62.

<sup>184</sup> Clive Erricker, Jane Erricker, Danny Sullivan, Cathy Ota and Mandy Fletcher, *The Education of the Whole Child* (London: Cassell, 1997).

<sup>185</sup> Rebecca Nye and David Hay, ‘Identifying Children’s Spirituality: how do you start without a starting point?’ *British Journal of Religious Education* 18, no. 3 (1995): 144-154.

and responsibility.<sup>186</sup> Slee notes how the lack of these positive components in childhood can contribute to a sense of alienation.<sup>187</sup> The subject of children's spirituality has been explored by Crompton,<sup>188</sup> who describes practical ways in which it can be respected, developed and nurtured in two handbooks published by the children's NGO, Barnardo's.<sup>189</sup>

Elisabeth Arweck, from a study of attitudes to religious diversity of 13–16 year-old pupils in British Schools, describes how they defined their religious (or non-religious) identities and understood belief (and non-belief) in relation to their social contexts.<sup>190</sup> Arweck argues that much previous research about young people's attitudes to religion has related either to those in their later teens<sup>191</sup> or to children under ten.<sup>192</sup> One reason for this is that, 'young people in their early teens tend to be in flux regarding their

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<sup>186</sup> John Bradford, *Caring for the Whole Child: A holistic approach to spirituality* (London: The Children's Society, 1995), 3.

<sup>187</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 91.

<sup>188</sup> Margaret Crompton, *Children, Spirituality, Religion and Social Work* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), xv, developed in Chapters 5–10.

<sup>189</sup> Margaret Crompton, *'Who am I?' Promoting Children's Spiritual Well-being in Everyday Life: A guide for all who care for children* (Barkingside: Barnardo's, 2001). Also Margaret Crompton, ed., *Respecting Children's Spiritual Well-being: a practice guide* (Belfast: Barnardo's Northern Ireland, 2007).

<sup>190</sup> Arweck, 'I've been christened, but I don't really believe in it'.

<sup>191</sup> For example, Smith and Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Teenagers*; Douglas Davies, and Mathew Guest, *Bishops, Wives and Children: Spiritual Capital across the Generations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Jessica Jacobson, *Islam in Transition: Religion and Identity among British Pakistani Youth* (London: Routledge, 1998); Jasjit Singh, 'Head First: Young British Sikhs, Hair and the Turban', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 25, no 2 (2010): 203–220; Giselle Vincett, Elizabeth Olson, Peter Hopkins and Rachel Pain, 'Young People and Performance Christianity in Scotland' *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 27, no. 2 (2012): 275–290.

<sup>192</sup> For example, David Voas and Siobhan McAndrew, 'Three Puzzles of Non-religion in Britain', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 27, no. 1 (2012): 29–48; Anne Phillips, *The Faith of Girls: Children's Spirituality and Transition to Adulthood* (Farnham, Surrey & Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).



identities and beliefs, while older teens and emerging adults tend to be more settled in this regard.’<sup>193</sup> However, ethnographic studies undertaken by WRERU since the 1980s have considered young people in their mid-teens (13–16 years) across a range of religions, as have Leslie Francis and his colleagues in some of their, mostly quantitative, research.<sup>194</sup>

### **Subsection conclusion**

Subsection 1.2.4. briefly reviewed recent research into children’s religion and spirituality that forms the backdrop for the argument developed in this thesis. Whilst not precluding cognitive growth and maturity as a factor in the progression of spirituality in adolescence, this thesis prioritises holistic care theory that underlines the need for spiritual and moral aspects of child development to be recognised and incorporated into the curriculum for children and young people. It assumes, following the arguments of Crompton and of Watson, amongst others, that children and young people are entitled to spiritual and religious nurture as well as physical and cognitive care.<sup>195</sup> It concurs with Bradford’s reasoning that spiritual development is affected by features of individual experience<sup>196</sup> and Crompton’s view that ‘all and any forms of neglect may be seen as implying a failure to protect and nurture the spirit integral to the whole child.’

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<sup>193</sup> Arweck, ‘I’ve been christened, but I don’t really believe in it’, fn. 6.

<sup>194</sup> WRERU stands for Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit. A full list of relevant publications is available at <http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/WRERU> accessed 4/2/2013.

<sup>195</sup> Crompton, *Children, Spirituality, Religion and Social Work*, 3-24; Watson, ‘Every Child Matters and children’s spiritual rights’.

<sup>196</sup> Bradford, *Caring for the Whole Child*, 3.

The study is informed and enlightened by the argument that, ‘the search for meaning and direction is of critical concern for children’,<sup>197</sup> that resilience and recovery is contributed to by religious faith,<sup>198</sup> and, that the existence of hope and a sense of meaning in life are of central importance.<sup>199</sup> These themes: holistic care, spiritual nurture, components of individual experience, the need for hope and the search for meaning and direction in life are all central to the argument of this thesis.

### **1.2.5. Faith development theory**

This subsection discusses the work of Fowler and subsequent scholarship in the field of faith development theory. As demonstrated by Hay et al., ‘as psychology became popular during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, much of the research regarding children emphasised cognitive developmental theories.’<sup>200</sup> The most significant initiator of stage development theory in relation to religious faith was Fowler. This section a) outlines Fowler’s theory of faith development, b) examines some critiques of the theory and c) reviews the body of research that followed it.

#### ***a) Fowler’s research and theory***

Fowler conducted nearly 400 non-structured in-depth interviews in order to ‘overhear’

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<sup>197</sup> Kate Cairns, ‘Climate for learning,’ *Social Work Today* 2, no. 38 (1990): 27.

<sup>198</sup> Cairns, *Surviving paedophilia*, 93.

<sup>199</sup> Jean Clinton, ‘Resilience and recovery,’ *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 13, no. 3 (2008): 213-222.

<sup>200</sup> Hay, Nye and Murphy, ‘Thinking about childhood spirituality’, 47.

people's 'ways of shaping and interpreting meaning from their lives',<sup>201</sup> their 'life-shaping experiences and relationships'<sup>202</sup> and their 'present values and commitments'.<sup>203</sup> He sought examples that illustrate 'how views and values relate to action' in their lives.<sup>204</sup> From these data, he constructed a seven-stage theory describing the typical development of faith during a lifespan:

1. Primal Faith
2. Intuitive-Projective Faith
3. Mythic-Literal Faith
4. Synthetic-Conventional Faith
5. Individuative-Reflective Faith
6. Conjunctive Faith
7. Universalizing Faith

Primal Faith begins before birth and continues into the pre-language phase of early infancy. It involves 'a total emotional orientation of trust' in the 'mutuality of one's relationship with parents and with others.'<sup>205</sup> Based on Piaget's theory, Fowler contends

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<sup>201</sup> James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: the Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, 308, Appendix A.

<sup>202</sup> Fowler, *Stages of Faith: the Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, 308, Appendix A.

<sup>203</sup> Fowler, *Stages of Faith: the Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, 309, Appendix A.

<sup>204</sup> Fowler, *Stages of Faith: the Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, 310, Appendix A.

<sup>205</sup> James Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', in Fritz Oser and W. George Scarlett, eds, *Religious Development in Childhood and Adolescence. New Directions for Child Development* Volume 52 (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 34.

that an infant develops through a ‘succession of cognitive and emotional separations’,<sup>206</sup> and that ‘rudimentary faith’ enables him to overcome or offset the resultant anxiety. Family is vital ‘in the nurturing and incubation of this first stage of faith.’<sup>207</sup>

Intuitive-Projective Faith ‘emerges with the acquisition of language.’<sup>208</sup> Imagination ‘combines with perception and feelings to create long-lasting faith images’, which ‘represent both the protective and threatening powers’ of life. This stage ‘corresponds with the awakening of moral emotions and standards in the second year of life’ and ‘the struggle for a balance of autonomy and will with shame and constriction.’<sup>209</sup> Images of God, seen as a person, are influenced by early experiences with parents or other adults. This is an important period ‘both positively and negatively’ in ‘the formation of our lifelong orientations in faith.’<sup>210</sup>

Mythic-Literal Faith appears with the concrete-operational phase of cognitive development as the child begins to think logically, to ‘order the world with categories of causality, space, time and number’<sup>211</sup> and to distinguish between reality and fantasy. Ability to see another person’s perspective and to capture ‘life and meanings in narrative stories’ develops and, in a sense, the ‘structuring qualities’ of the mythic-literal faith

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<sup>206</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 34.

<sup>207</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 34.

<sup>208</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 34.

<sup>209</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 34.

<sup>210</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 35.

<sup>211</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 35.

seem necessary for the person's emotional stability.<sup>212</sup>

Synthetic-Conventional Faith typically emerges in early adolescence with the development of formal operational thinking. It 'opens the way for reliance on abstract ideas and concepts for making sense of one's world',<sup>213</sup> alongside the ability to 'reflect on past experiences and examine them for meaning and pattern.' There is emphasis on self-identity, personal relationships and self-consciousness in seeing oneself as others do. 'These newly personal relations with significant others correlate with a hunger for a personal relationship to God in which we feel ourselves to be known and loved in deep and comprehensive ways.'<sup>214</sup> The person forms 'a set of beliefs, values and commitments that provides orientation and courage for living.'<sup>215</sup>

Individuative-Reflective Faith involves, firstly, questioning, examining and reconstituting the values and beliefs formed in the past until faith commitment becomes explicit in the sense of being 'consciously chosen and critically supported'. Due to critical analysis and reflection, this usually involves losing some of the power of symbol, myth and ritual to mediate with the holy, but gaining clarity and 'precision in understanding and articulation' so that the person 'owns' his or her faith.<sup>216</sup> Secondly, it

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<sup>212</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 37.

<sup>213</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 37.

<sup>214</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

<sup>215</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

<sup>216</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 39.

requires the person to develop an ‘executive ego’,<sup>217</sup> moving on from the identification of self in relation to others, or by means of roles, ‘to take charge of one’s own life’.<sup>218</sup> ‘It means claiming a new quality of autonomy and responsibility.’ There is a search for vocation in the sense of ‘the meaning we attribute to our lives and the significance we find in the totality of our roles and activities.’<sup>219</sup> ‘Both identity and individuation need to be understood in relation to vocation and to what our lives are for.’<sup>220</sup>

Conjunctive Faith is characterised by the ability to integrate and embrace polarities in our lives and consequently a new appreciation of the ‘symbol and story, metaphor and myth, both from our own traditions and from others.’ Fowler concludes: ‘Having looked critically at traditions and translated their meanings into conceptual understandings, we experience a hunger for a deeper relationship to the reality that symbols mediate. In that deeper relationship we learn to let the symbols have the initiative with us.’<sup>221</sup>

Universalizing Faith describes a condition of being ‘grounded in a oneness with the power of being or God.’<sup>222</sup> Fowler explains:

Their visions and commitments seem to free them for a passionate, yet detached, spending of the self in love. Such persons are devoted to overcoming division,

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<sup>217</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 39.

<sup>218</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 39.

<sup>219</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 40.

<sup>220</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 40.

<sup>221</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 40.

<sup>222</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 41.

oppression and violence, and they live in effective anticipatory response to the felt reality of an inbreaking commonwealth of love and justice.<sup>223</sup>

During stages three to seven, a person's perspective steadily widens from self towards God. 'Valuing' is 'done from an identification with the transcendent or with God' and leads finally to 'a universalization of her or his capacity for care, for love, and for justice.'<sup>224</sup> Few people reach the final stage, in which 'they engage in the dangerous occupation of confronting us with our involvement in and attachments to dehumanizing structures of opposition to the commonwealth of love and justice.'<sup>225</sup>

For Fowler, faith is the basis of 'a person's composition and maintenance of a comprehensive frame (or frames) of meaning'<sup>226</sup> and 'is by no means confined to explicitly religious beliefs or practice.'<sup>227</sup> Faith 'gives coherence and direction to persons' lives' and 'links them in shared trusts and loyalties with others.' It 'grounds their personal stances and communal loyalties in a sense of relatedness to a larger frame of reference' and 'enables them to face and deal with the limit conditions of human life, relying upon that which has the quality of ultimacy in their lives.'<sup>228</sup> Whilst for many

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<sup>223</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 41.

<sup>224</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 41.

<sup>225</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 41.

<sup>226</sup> Fowler, 'Faith and the Structuring of Meaning' (1986), 25.

<sup>227</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 28.

<sup>228</sup> James W. Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Postmodern Life* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 56.

faith is expressed ‘through the symbols, rituals and beliefs of particular religious traditions’, many others now ‘weave and paint their meaning-canvases in communities other than religious, and often with symbols or stories which have no direct relationship to traditions of group piety or religious worship.’<sup>229</sup>

### ***b) Critiques of Fowler’s theory***

Since Fowler pioneered faith development stage theory, there have been many criticisms and modifications of his theory and Fowler himself has continued to contribute to this debate.<sup>230</sup>

Marlene Jardine rates Fowler’s achievements as the positive placing of faith development in human development theory, the separation of belief from stages of development and success in relating ways in which we understand and experience transcendent faith to cognitive, affective and psychosocial maturity.<sup>231</sup> However, she argues that weaknesses are inherent in its employment of both cognitive<sup>232</sup> and affective<sup>233</sup> models of human development whilst remaining ‘essentially structuralist’, being more dependent on the cognitive model, with its invariant, hierarchical sequence

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<sup>229</sup> Fowler, ‘Faith and the Structuring of Meaning’ (1986), 15-16.

<sup>230</sup> See James W. Fowler, Heinz Streib and Barbara Keller, *Manual for Faith Development Research* <http://www.academia.edu/259610/>, accessed 29/11/2012.

<sup>231</sup> Marlene M. Jardine, ‘Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development: An Evaluative Discussion,’ *Religious Education* 87, no. 1 (1992): 74-85.

<sup>232</sup> Derived from Piaget. See, for example: Piaget, *The Child’s Perception of the World*; Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child*.

<sup>233</sup> Derived from Erikson, for example: Erik H. Erikson and Joan M. Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed* (New York, NY: Norton, 1987).



of stages than the affective approach (which views development as predetermined by biological growth).<sup>234</sup>

Although Fowler views cognition and affection as inseparable, his faith development scale ‘still overstresses rational aspects, especially at the fourth stage (Individuative-Reflective faith).’<sup>235</sup> According to Jardine, Fowler fails to identify an integrating theory of ego or personality development that takes account of subjective influences on responses to moral dilemmas.<sup>236</sup> Seeing faith development in cognitive terms rather than relating to personality growth factors affects the categorisation of most adults on Fowler’s scale. Bias arises from the influence of personality factors where a) abstract, theoretical thinkers are placed higher than concrete thinkers with a more practical approach, b) those with a more affective focus (mostly women) are placed lower than those with a more rational focus (mostly men) and c) students of the liberal arts, especially theoretical disciplines, are placed higher than the general population. Jardine concludes that Fowler’s failure to take account of this, in his research sample and analysis, highlights the need for empirical validation studies before the theory is applied to educational or pastoral practice.

Ellis Nelson and Daniel Aleshire, acknowledging the difficulties of developmental research, find that difficulties with Fowler’s theory are compounded by the subject of

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<sup>234</sup> Jardine, ‘Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development’, 77.

<sup>235</sup> Jardine, ‘Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development’, 79.

<sup>236</sup> Jardine, ‘Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development’, 79.

inquiry – belief, faith and values.<sup>237</sup> Harris finds the system too rigid to be universally applicable,<sup>238</sup> asking, ‘how crucial are the chronological assignments of the six stages at certain ages?’ Harris questions the feasibility of presenting ‘large portions of each stage description’ as sequential, whether ‘the boundaries and limits’ could be ‘more fluid so that elements in several stages form new constellations’ and what this means for people who are retarded, very young or illiterate.<sup>239</sup> She suggests that we are ‘in danger of drowning in techniques and behavioural objectives, in methods and procedures’ and omitting the ‘religious’ from religious education.<sup>240</sup> Further research has attempted to test Fowler’s claims for cross-cultural universality,<sup>241</sup> with implications for his assertion that the content of the faith of participants is not relevant to the stage of faith attained.

Slee, whilst recognising the importance of extensive studies of faith development by Fowler, Fritz Oser and Paul Gmünder,<sup>242</sup> and utilising the scholarship as part of the framework for her own work, finds that such ‘cognitive structural theories’ have their

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<sup>237</sup> Ellis C. Nelson and Daniel Aleshire, ‘Research in Faith Development’, in Dykstra and Parks, eds, *Faith Development and Fowler* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1986), 184.

<sup>238</sup> Harris, ‘Completion and Faith Development’, 115-133.

<sup>239</sup> Harris, ‘Completion and Faith Development’, 122.

<sup>240</sup> Harris, ‘Completion and Faith Development’, 127.

<sup>241</sup> For example, John Snarey, ‘Faith Development, Moral development and non-theistic Judaism: a construct validity study, in William M. Kurtines and Jacob L. Gewirtz, eds, *Handbook of Moral Behaviour and Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991), 279-305; Randall Y. Furushima, ‘Faith Development in a Cross Cultural Perspective’ *Religious Education* 80, no. 3 (1985): 414-420.

<sup>242</sup> For example: Fritz Oser, ‘Stages of Religious Judgment’, in Christiane Brusselmans and James A. O’Donohoe, eds, *Toward moral and religious maturity* (Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett, 1980); Fritz Oser, ‘The development of religious judgment’, in Fritz Oser and W. George Scarlett, eds, *Religious Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 5-25; Fritz Oser and Paul Gmünder, *Religious Judgment: A Developmental Approach* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1991).

limitations and criticises them as being biased against women and girls.<sup>243</sup> She contends that the limitations and inadequacies of the development theory, in relation to women, include the andocentric basis of Fowler's sources, his 'images and metaphors of faith', the 'models of mature faith adumbrated', 'theoretical understanding and operationalization of faith' and 'the account of stage development proposed'.<sup>244</sup> Women tend to achieve lower scores and to progress later to the 'higher stages' because the theory is 'based on male norms more than typically female, relational ways of operating'.<sup>245</sup> Moreover, Fowler's final stage idealises 'negation of ties',<sup>246</sup> which is problematic for women.<sup>247</sup>

### **c) *Post-Fowler research***

Significant scholarship has ensued from Fowler's faith development theory.<sup>248</sup> There have been studies that set out to replicate Fowler's research or to test his theory by means of empirical methodology and attempts to test the stage theory by analysing data obtained from a wide age range or from a sub-group, such as younger, middle aged or

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<sup>243</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 16.

<sup>244</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 9.

<sup>245</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 32.

<sup>246</sup> James W. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 73.

<sup>247</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 32.

<sup>248</sup> For reviews of this scholarship, see, Nicola Slee, 'Further on from Fowler: post-Fowler faith development research', in Leslie Francis, William K. Kay and William S. Campbell, eds, *Research in Religious Education* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1996), 73-96; Stephen Parker, 'Research in Fowler' *Review of Religious Research* 51, no. 3 (2009): 233-252; James W. Fowler, Heinz Streib and Barbara Keller, *Manual for Faith Development Research*. <http://www.academia.edu/259610/>, accessed 29/11/2012.

older respondents or those in faith stage transition.<sup>249</sup>

### *Empirical research*

Several researchers employed empirical tests, designed to create a reliable measure of faith development. Charles Green and Cindy Hoffman studied perceptions of Caucasian college students with different religious orientations and measured responses against their stages of faith development to determine 'their attitudes towards similar and dissimilar others.'<sup>250</sup> Their findings support the view 'that one's faith stage has an important impact upon other aspects of one's behaviour.'<sup>251</sup> However, they found a significant number of young students in Stage Five (which Fowler regards as a phenomenon of middle-age) and suggest that these students may be attracted by the sentiments, rather than living by the ideals or, alternatively, that Fowler's 'stages' may actually be types of faith rather than sequential development.

Michael Barnes, Dennis Doyle and Byron Johnson devised an 'objective instrument' to

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<sup>249</sup> For example, T. P. Kalaam, 'The Myth of Stages and Sequence in Moral and Religious Development' (Unpublished Ph D. dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1981); Sharon D. Parks, 'Faith Development and Imagination in the Context of Higher Education' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Harvard, 1980); Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years: the young adult search for a faith to live by* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Row, 1986); Perry E. Bassett, 'Faith Development and Mid-life Transition: Fowler's Paradigm as it Relates to Personality Profile' (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Baylor, 1985); M.A. Backlund, 'Faith and AIDS: Life Crisis as a Stimulus to Faith Stage Transition' (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, 1990); Richard M. Shulik, 'Faith Development, Moral Development and Old Age: an Assessment of Fowler's Faith Development Paradigm' (Unpublished Ph D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1979); T. R. Hamrick, 'Transitional Factors in the Faith Development of Middle Adults' (Unpublished Ph D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1988).

<sup>250</sup> Charles Green and Cindy Hoffman, 'Stages of Faith and Perceptions of Similar and Dissimilar Others', *Review of Religious Research* 30, no. 3 (1989): 246.

<sup>251</sup> Green and Hoffman, 'Stages of Faith and Perceptions of Similar and Dissimilar Others', 253.

test the theory Fowler had constructed from interview data.<sup>252</sup> Due to practical constraints in testing the 'sequential' nature of stage theory, they called them 'faith styles' and found that several of Fowler's six stages are the 'faith styles' of some adults. Similar classifications arise in other research.<sup>253</sup> Barnes et al. surveyed 275 members of the College Theological Society and 304 members of a Catholic parish in Ohio, in order 'to find out how literal-traditional or how symbolic-liberal they were in their beliefs.'<sup>254</sup> Measuring responses according to Fowler's stages, they found good consistency of responses within each faith style and good correlation between faith style groups and styles of belief.<sup>255</sup> Their findings support Fowler's claims, showing that 'characteristics which he assigned do cluster together in the responses.'<sup>256</sup> Each faith style correlates 'with at least some measure of how literally or symbolically a person interprets religious beliefs'<sup>257</sup> and 'provides a thorough description of aspects of religiousness, integrating those aspects into coherent patterns.'<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Michael Barnes, Dennis Doyle and Byron Johnson, 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale: an Empirical Assessment among Catholics', *Review of Religious Research* 30, no. 4 (1989), 412-420.

<sup>253</sup> See, for example, Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 413. They argue that, 'the extrinsic style of faith as described by Batson and Ventis is akin to Fowler's Stage Two, in which religion or faith is important as only one of the environmental facts to be dealt with in order to satisfy one's own needs.' C. Daniel Batson and W. Larry Ventis, *The Religious Experience: a social-psychological perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) 234-235.

<sup>254</sup> Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 414. In a questionnaire, respondents were asked to choose one from each pair of statements (nine pairs) designed to test the 'internal coherence' of responses within each faith style. Further questions related to ten issues of Catholic belief, with paired statements requiring a choice to be made between a literal or a symbolic way of expressing the belief or between a symbolic and a 'nuanced' expression.

<sup>255</sup> Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 416-417.

<sup>256</sup> Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 418.

<sup>257</sup> Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 418.

<sup>258</sup> Barnes et al., 'The Formulation of a Fowler Scale', 419.

### *Correlation with other variables*

Some studies have tested the correlation of Fowler's faith stages with other variables, such as age, gender, personality, socio-economic status or religious affiliation.<sup>259</sup>

Studies of women's faith development have explored the gender-equality or bias of Fowler's developmental scale.<sup>260</sup> With regard to 'omissions and distortions' relating to gender bias,<sup>261</sup> Slee suggests that Fowler's theory offers an incomplete version of women's faith and its development. She contends that account must be taken of studies focused on women's faith<sup>262</sup> because they 'offer fresh perspectives' and indicate that women develop from being 'dependent, passive and unknowing to a state of heightened

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<sup>259</sup> For example, Margaret Gorman, 'Moral and Faith Development in Seventeen-Year-Old Students', *Religious Education* 72, no. 5 (1977); Voncil Minrose White, 'Faith Stages, Affiliation and Gender: a Study of the Faith Development of Catholic College Undergraduates' (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Boston, 1985); S. N. Broun 'An Analysis of Ego Development and Religious Development' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1984); R. B. Bradley, 'An Exploration of the Relationship between Fowler's Theory of Faith Development and Myers-Brigg Personality Type' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1983); Bassett, 'Faith Development and Mid-life Transition'. Richard Shulik, 'Faith Development in Older Adults' *Educational Gerontology* 14 (1988): 291-301; John Snarey, 'Faith Development, Moral Development and Non-theistic Judaism: A Construct Validity Study', in William M. Kurtines and Jacob L. Gewirtz, eds., *Handbook of Moral Behaviour and Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991), 279-305. Timothy P. Jones, 'An Analysis of the Relationship between Fowlerian Stage-development and Self-assessed Maturity in Christian Faithfulness among Evangelical Christians' (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, KY, 2003).

<sup>260</sup> For example, White, 'Faith Stages, Affiliation and Gender'; J. A. M. Cooney, 'Holistic Relationality: Themes of Transition in Women's Faith Development' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Boston University, 1985); N. G. Devor, 'Towards a Relational Voice of Faith: Contributions of James Fowler's Faith Development Theory. Psychological Research on Women's Development, Relational Feminist Theology, and a Qualitative Analysis of Women Ministers' Faith Descriptions' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Boston University, 1989).

<sup>261</sup> Discussed in 1.2.5.b)

<sup>262</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 32. Examples are the scholarship of theologians Carter Heyward, Mary Grey and Katherine Zappone and developmental psychologists, such as Jean Baker Miller, Carol Gilligan et al., and Nancy Chodorow. Their findings indicate that women's spirituality is 'essentially related' and 'rooted in a strong sense of connection to others and an ethic of care and responsibility'; connectedness is the significant context for women's faith.

awareness, initiative and empowerment.<sup>263</sup>

The perception arises from this literature that processes of faith development do not necessarily involve a linear developmental stage progression. They can be about diving deep, spiralling, moving inward<sup>264</sup> or about movement from *an experience of nothingness* through *awakening* to a *new naming* – often associated with greater integration and wholeness.<sup>265</sup> There is a *process of awareness* in women, as they find their identity in a spirituality that is like a dance of seven key steps, which do not go up or down, but involve ‘movement backward and forward, turn and return, bending and bowing, circling and spiraling, and no need to finish or move on to the next step, except in our own good time, and God’s.’<sup>266</sup>

Slee concludes that these feminist models of women’s faith improve upon Fowler’s work in several notable ways. They portray a ‘broader, more holistic process of development shaped by affect, imagination and relationships as well as by cognitive structures.’<sup>267</sup> As opposed to Fowler’s linear, sequential and irreversible stages of development, the models ‘offer a more fluid and varied account of transition’ that can

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<sup>263</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 37.

<sup>264</sup> Mary Grey, *Redeeming the Dream: Feminism, Redemption and Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1989), 70.

<sup>265</sup> Carol P. Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing: Women Writers on Spiritual Quest*, 3rd edn. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995), 120.

<sup>266</sup> Maria Harris, *Dance of the Spirit: the Seven Steps of Women’s Spirituality* (New York: Bantam, 1989), xii. The seven steps identified by Harris are: awakening, dis-covering, creating, dwelling, nourishing, traditioning and transforming.

<sup>267</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 40.

move in different directions, including regressively.<sup>268</sup> Whereas Fowler believes faith development to be ‘uniform across diverse contexts’, feminist models maintain that ‘women’s religious development is shaped profoundly by the cultural context of patriarchy which is antithetical to women’s full personhood and spirituality’ and that ‘the socio-political context of gender oppression and socialisation must be given priority in the analysis of women’s faith lives.’<sup>269</sup>

Significant research has explored relationships between stages of moral development and faith development stages.<sup>270</sup> In a study of the moral and faith development of 17 year-olds, Margaret Gorman examined the structure of their faith and their construction of meaning and conceptualisation of God. She found no correlation between levels of faith or moral development according to most variables,<sup>271</sup> but significantly high positive correlations with socio-economic level and IQ, unsurprising, ‘since both Kohlberg and Fowler admit a strong cognitive factor in their theory.’<sup>272</sup> However, Gorman observed that: ‘sensitivity to life issues as a result of some important event’ (such as bereavement or illness) seemed ‘more important in faith development particularly, than

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<sup>268</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 40.

<sup>269</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 40.

<sup>270</sup> For example, Clark F. Power and Lawrence Kohlberg, ‘Religion, Morality and Ego-development’, in Christiane Brusselmans, ed., *Towards moral and religious maturity* (Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett Company, 1980), 344-372; John Snarey, ‘Faith Development, Moral development and non-theistic Judaism: a construct validity study’, in William M. Kurtines and Jacob L. Gewirtz, eds., *Handbook of Moral Behaviour and Development* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991), 279-305.

<sup>271</sup> These were variables of sex, locality, experience of death, type of religious affiliation, type of school and church attendance.

<sup>272</sup> Margaret Gorman, ‘Moral and Faith Development in Seventeen-Year-Old Students’, *Religious Education* 72, no. 5 (1977): 496.



intelligence.’<sup>273</sup> A key growth factor is conflict that sees the existing structure give way to one ‘more capable of assimilating the event.’<sup>274</sup>

Wilton Bunch studied the phenomenon of moral judgement in groups of divinity students. He argues that, whereas moral growth generally correlates with advancing education, curricula that are strongly Bible-based may not promote, and students with a strong fundamentalist orientation may not demonstrate, such moral growth. His findings demonstrated that ‘small group discussions, shown to improve moral reasoning scores in other educational settings, are also successful in a strongly biblical environment.’<sup>275</sup>

Another strand of research has investigated relationships between faith development and personality, making comparisons between Fowler’s findings and aspects of psychological theory, such as Jung’s stages of personality development,<sup>276</sup> ‘Rizzuto’s neo-Freudian analysis of the God-image’<sup>277</sup> the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory,<sup>278</sup> personality and mid-life transition,<sup>279</sup> Jung’s analysis of introversion and extroversion<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Gorman, ‘Moral and Faith Development in Seventeen-Year-Old Students’: 497.

<sup>278</sup> Gorman, ‘Moral and Faith Development in Seventeen-Year-Old Students’: 498.

<sup>275</sup> Wilton H. Bunch, ‘Changing moral judgement in divinity students’, *Journal of Moral Education* 34, Issue 3 (2005): 363.

<sup>276</sup> G. G. Raduka, ‘An Investigation of Hypothesised Correspondence between Fowlerian Stages of Faith Development and Jungian Stages of Personality Development’ (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1980).

<sup>277</sup> M. Thompson, ‘Fowler and Rizzuto: Making Sense of Life and Ourselves’ (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1988).

<sup>278</sup> Bradley, ‘An Exploration of the Relationship between Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development and Myers-Brigg Personality Type’.

<sup>279</sup> Bassett, ‘Faith Development and Mid-life Transition’.

and Jung's theory of the role of imagination and faith.<sup>281</sup> Of interest to this thesis is Perry Bassett's conclusion that 'greater intelligence, trust, self-sufficiency, resourcefulness, tranquillity/composure, and self-assurance/security correlated positively with faith development.'<sup>282</sup>

Stephen Parker investigated relationships between attachment and faith development, demonstrating that 'attachment anxiety (but not attachment avoidance) predicts faith development', suggesting that 'for faith to grow, individuals must see their attachment figures (and presumably God) with no fear of abandonment; that is, they must see themselves (not just others) as worthy of love and acceptance.'<sup>283</sup> Parker has applied his insights into faith development theory in the field of Christian counselling.<sup>284</sup>

## Conclusion

1.2.5. outlined the central tenets of Fowler's theory, drew attention to critiques of it and reviewed research studies that test its claims. Whilst many, including Fowler himself, continue to debate the theory, it holds much that is of value in the field of faith

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<sup>280</sup> J. Chirban, 'Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation in Faith Development' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Harvard, 1980).

<sup>281</sup> D. J. Loomis, 'The Relationship of Imagination to Religious Faith among Presbyterian Church Elders, Considering the Mediating Influence of Intuition' (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1987); Sharon D. Parks, 'Faith Development and Imagination in the Context of Higher Education.'

<sup>282</sup> Bassett, 'Faith Development and Mid-life Transition', 1.

<sup>283</sup> Stephen Parker, 'Measuring faith development' *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 34 (2006): 337-348.

<sup>284</sup> Stephen Parker, 'Faith development theory as a context for supervision of spiritual and religious issues' *Counselor Education and Supervision* 49 (2009): 39-53.

development and has relevance to the processes of spiritual development discussed in this thesis.<sup>285</sup> Although cognitive development theory has furthered our understanding of child development, it does not entirely explain the faith of young people. Fowler's work is set in a particular culture and from a viewpoint influenced by normal cognitive developmental theory. The development of children who have lived on the streets and endured imprisonment is retarded or patchy; they may be streetwise and hardened, precocious in some ways, but their emotional, intellectual and spiritual lives have often been neglected. They may not fit comfortably within a linear scheme such as that proposed by Fowler.

### **Section summary**

This section examined the major areas of context for this study in terms of the extent and nature of child imprisonment, background information about the Philippines, prisons and rehabilitation centres as organisations, the scholarship on children and spirituality and Fowler and post-Fowler faith development theory. Section 1.3. examines more closely Slee's theory of women's faith development, with particular attention to the patterns of faith she describes.

### **1.3. Slee's faith development theory**

Slee's work is rooted in faith development theory, especially that of Fowler, whose model of faith she describes as 'an active, dynamic, affective and cognitive process of

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<sup>285</sup> See 4.3, 4.4 and 5.1.

meaning-making which is a human universal, engaging every human being from birth to death in the search for ultimate meaning.<sup>286</sup> She aims to give greater significance to women's spiritual journeys than previously accorded.<sup>287</sup> She summarises the competing theories in faith development and comments on them from a feminist and women's perspective, to establish a framework for her own research, in which she 'seeks to explore the dynamics and possible patternings in that process of change, as well as to identify particular developmental crises and opportunities in the unfolding of women's faith lives.'<sup>288</sup> The major aim of the research is 'to examine the patterns and processes of women's spirituality and faith development in a group of women belonging to, or on the edges of, Christian tradition';<sup>289</sup> a 'subsidiary aim is to discern whether current models and theories of faith development are able adequately to account for women's experience.'<sup>290</sup> Section 1.3.1. briefly describes Slee's methodology. 1.3.2. outlines her theory of the processes of women's faithing, and 1.3.3. explains in greater detail her theory of patterns of faith development.

### **1.3.1. Slee's generative methodology**

Slee conducted in-depth interviews with 30 women aged between 30 and 67 years, who self-identified as being within, or on the boundaries of, Christianity. They included

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<sup>286</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 28.

<sup>287</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 3.

<sup>288</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 4.

<sup>289</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 4.

<sup>290</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 4.

women of differing sexual orientations and ethnic origin. All were of graduate or similar educational level; 24 described themselves as middle class, the remainder working class. Two women were non-church goers, four attended occasionally and nineteen represented a variety of denominations; eight were ordained ministers.<sup>291</sup>

Slee analysed the rich interview data to create her own theory of faith development. She used qualitative research and a methodology that develops theory ‘from the ground upwards’ in an attempt to draw out ‘issues, meanings, themes and possible trends or patterns.’<sup>292</sup> She claims that her conversations with the women ‘form the linguistic and narrative heart’ of her work, keeping ‘the text earthed in real women’s situations, dilemmas, growing pains and achievements.’<sup>293</sup>

These data record the ‘neglected stories of women’s lives’<sup>294</sup> and challenge previous accounts, which were based on the lives of men. Her research is generative, in that the act of listening to the ways in which women describe their own faith is in itself meaningful, insightful and illuminating and can generate new understandings.<sup>295</sup> In contrast with the strictly defined and progressive stage development theory promoted by Fowler, Oser and Gmünder, Slee identifies six ‘strategies’ (*processes*) women use to talk

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<sup>291</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 52-3.

<sup>292</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 10.

<sup>293</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 11.

<sup>294</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 12.

<sup>295</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 14.

about their faith<sup>296</sup> and three ‘generative themes’ (*patterns*) that appear to ‘represent basic and recurring patterns in the women’s faith lives.’<sup>297</sup>

### **1.3.2. Processes of women’s faithing**

From her analysis of the interview transcripts, Slee identifies six ‘distinct faithing strategies’<sup>298</sup> used by women in relating their own faith development. She terms these ‘the processes of women’s faithing’.<sup>299</sup> Slee names these six processes: Conversational Faithing, Metaphoric Faithing, Narrative Faithing, Personalised Faithing, Conceptual Faithing and Apophatic Faithing. They categorise features like the use of imagery, dialogue, narrative and delivery and highlight ways in which tones of speech, body language and linguistic flow often match content.

### **1.3.3. Patterns of women’s faith development**

Of particular relevance to this thesis are the three ‘patterns’ seen as typical of women’s faith development identified by Slee. These are Alienation, Awakenings and Relationality; they form the major content of her theory.

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<sup>296</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 13.

<sup>297</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 14.

<sup>298</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 61.

<sup>299</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 61. Slee prefers to use the verb ‘faithing’, rather than the noun ‘faith’, in order to emphasise the active, dynamic process of faith development. See Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 61, fn. 3.

## *Alienation*

Slee defines alienation, as ‘a profound loss of self, of authentic connection with others, and of faith.’<sup>300</sup> Women typically undergo a period (or recurring periods) of spiritual disconnection,<sup>301</sup> in which they feel separate from and alienated from themselves and others, the world and from God.<sup>302</sup> Although described in various ways, there were repeated themes and expressions, such as feelings of emptiness, confusion, loss of self-identity, depression, feeling ‘lost’ in a wilderness<sup>303</sup> or, conversely, ‘imprisoned’ in a confined space from which they were unable to escape.<sup>304</sup> Some said that they were constantly seeking for something more, spiritually, although they did not know or were unable to define what it was.<sup>305</sup> Many interviewees were still in this state of alienation, which could frequently be attributed to childhood abuse, neglect or strict religious upbringing, often reinforced by later experiences of prejudice, exploitation or being forced to submit to (male) authority.<sup>306</sup> A common trait is for a woman not to know who she is except in relation to her role as wife, mother, caregiver or professional worker.<sup>307</sup>

Alienation is a painful and often prolonged experience from which some perhaps never

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<sup>300</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 81.

<sup>301</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 83.

<sup>302</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 82.

<sup>303</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 89.

<sup>304</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 90.

<sup>305</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 98-100.

<sup>306</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 104-105.

<sup>307</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 83.

fully emerge but, even within the women's accounts of this profound suffering, there are signs of hope and expectation. 'Apophatic' terms such as feeling 'cut off', 'seeking more', 'being lost', show that women want and expect things to change and are willing to continue searching and growing until they find it.<sup>308</sup> Some described this period as a phase through which they had come or a place where they had been in the past and proceeded to say how they had overcome or moved out from it. Slee, optimistically, observes apparent 'potential for the experience of alienation to become a generating force for transformation.'<sup>309</sup>

### *Awakenings*

Slee names the second identified pattern of faith development 'awakenings'. She describes it as 'the liberating experience of awakening, breakthrough and a reconnection to their own power of selfhood as well as to a deeper awareness of their connectedness to others and to the divine.'<sup>310</sup> Slee sees this as 'the awakening to new consciousness' that 'demands a "new naming" of self, of reality and of God or one's core values.'<sup>311</sup> It also demonstrated an experience of awakening, which she describes (in comparable terms to those of Fowler's faith development Stage 5) as 'the ability to hold in tension paradox and polarity, to live self-consciously and creatively with ambiguity and to be

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<sup>308</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 98.

<sup>309</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 107.

<sup>310</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 109.

<sup>311</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 134.



open to multiple perspectives on reality.’<sup>312</sup>

This term 'awakenings' is found in the work of previous feminist writers and developed by Slee.<sup>313</sup> She notes the general agreement that 'women's awakening is not a once-for-all experience, but something that must be entered into again and again'<sup>314</sup> and that 'there is not simply one stage transition but many, each one recapitulating the process of deconstruction and reconstruction of the previous awakening.'<sup>315</sup> The process of awareness is one that recurs, with increasing integration and slightly deeper ownership each time. The experience of nothingness reappears but 'as women have the courage to confront each level or layer of paralysis and work through to new levels of awareness and awakening, there is a gradual and increasing growth of life and power as the new self becomes more firmly established.'<sup>316</sup>

Many women spoke of experiences of 'homecoming' and 'finding a centre'. These were not once and for all events but 'an ongoing, often gradual, process of working through paralysis and dependency, usually marked by struggle and ambivalence, towards increasing confidence and security of selfhood, in which the support and affirmation of the human other is an important source of strength and encouragement.'<sup>317</sup> Often

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<sup>312</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 164.

<sup>313</sup> For example, Harris, *Dance of the Spirit*; Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing*.

<sup>314</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 113.

<sup>315</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 113.

<sup>316</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 113.

<sup>317</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 125.

‘awakenings’ grew from creative pursuits, such as painting or writing, or vocational activities such as teaching, preaching or pastoral ministry, especially when personal gifts were confirmed by others. These pursuits might not be seen as spiritual, but they connected them with ‘self-exploration, hope and life’.<sup>318</sup>

For others there had been a contrasting experience: events such as illness, disability or bereavement had ‘acted as a catalyst to a new stage of faith.’<sup>319</sup> This was because ‘radical loss and grief provoked a crisis in which old assumptions, patterns of faith and identity structures were challenged at their core, discovered to be inadequate and fell apart, demanding the restructuring of new, more adequate ways of operating.’<sup>320</sup>

Awakenings can be sudden or gradual, short-lived and intense or longer periods when issues are re-worked many times.<sup>321</sup> It may be ‘a temporary or a more permanent resolution of paralysis.’<sup>322</sup> Identified features of awakenings included emphasis ‘on ordinary, concrete and mundane experience as the locus of spiritual awakening’ and on ‘the priority of intuition, bodily knowing and instinct over rational thinking, abstract thought or the dictates of conscience or authority.’<sup>323</sup> Often there was a preparatory

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<sup>318</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 130.

<sup>319</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 131.

<sup>320</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 131.

<sup>321</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 133.

<sup>322</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 133.

<sup>323</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 133.

period 'leading to the critical moment of awakening or breakthrough itself.'<sup>324</sup>

Further features were an experience of awakening 'marked by a sense of the coming together or coherence of different parts of the self' (e.g. inner/outer, secular/religious and emotion/thought being integrated, as opposed to the 'split self' of paralysis) a 'sense of actively taking responsibility for the self' and an ability to make choices. Some women at this time reject 'former patterns of religion' but others discover spirituality within a 'personally appropriated process of self-knowledge and awareness.'<sup>325</sup>

### *Relationality*

The third major pattern of faith development observed by Slee is that of 'relationality', which is defined as 'faith as being in relation with God and/or the Other'.<sup>326</sup> Slee identifies this in some women's accounts as having a 'sense of the presence of God at the core of life, holding things in being and nurturing one's life', sometimes despite continued 'inability to believe herself personally loved and accepted.'<sup>327</sup> The term 'relationality' has been used by previous feminist writers, such as Katherine Zappone<sup>328</sup> and Mary Grey,<sup>329</sup> building on the work of Carter Heyward.<sup>330</sup> As a woman awakens to a

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<sup>324</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 133.

<sup>325</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>326</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 140.

<sup>327</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 141.

<sup>328</sup> Katherine Zappone, *The Hope for Wholeness: A Spirituality for Feminists* (Mystic, CN: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991).

<sup>329</sup> Mary Grey, *Redeeming the Dream: Feminism, Redemption and Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1989); Mary Grey, *The Wisdom of Fools* (London: SPCK, 1993).

sense of self, there begins a:

process of coming into right relation with others, with the earth, with the cosmos, and with God as source of all relationality, in relationships which are marked by mutuality, responsiveness and coinherence. *Relationship* here ranges from intimate sexual relationships or friendships through political activism and working in tandem with the rhythms of the earth.<sup>331</sup>

Some of Slee's interviewees spoke of 'the God of justice'.<sup>332</sup> Slee comments that: 'This description of faith characterised by a strong emphasis on justice and the needs of the other in balance with the needs of the self, is reminiscent of Fowler's Stage 5 faith, in which the balance of different needs is held alongside a new quality of openness to the other and a recognition of paradox and mystery.'<sup>333</sup>

Although admitting that it cannot be assumed that findings are universally valid or appropriate,<sup>334</sup> Slee believes the models of patterns and processes 'suggest broad principles which can shape the pastoral care and Christian education of women and girls.'<sup>335</sup> She suggests they are pertinent for the 'formal learning and training environment of theological education in the adult school setting' and in 'the wider

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<sup>330</sup> Carter Heyward, *Touching Our Strength: The Erotic as Power and the Love of God* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1989).

<sup>331</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 137, discussing Mary Grey's concepts.

<sup>332</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 143.

<sup>333</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 143.

<sup>334</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 169.

<sup>335</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 168-9.

educational and pastoral life of the churches beyond specific and formal institutions of schooling' (prisons are included among many that hold informal acts of worship).<sup>336</sup>

Slee emphasises that, since andocentric ways of thinking do not suit women, the research is particularly relevant in the 'context of women's networks, communities and groupings in which women-only learning and mutual care takes place.'<sup>337</sup>

### **Section summary**

This section outlined the significant features of Slee's research on women's faith development. It described the main findings of her study based on interviews with women and her means of classification of the processes and patterns of women's faith development. Section 1.4. discusses how far Slee's findings are relevant to this study of the processes of spiritual transformation in the lives of boys from prison. It shows how Slee's patterns of women's faith development are used as a framework for my thesis and how they need to be modified in relation to the data collected in the Philippines.

## **1.4. The use of Slee's theory as a framework**

This thesis analyses the spiritual experiences of some boys found in prisons and rehabilitation centres in the Philippines. It identifies the main themes and describes the nature of the spiritual development that emerges from a close examination and analysis of statements made by boys and staff members and of observations in the field. Using

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<sup>336</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 169.

<sup>337</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 169.

Slee's findings as a basic theoretical framework to access the data and classify the boys' spiritual experiences, it compares the processes of the boys' faith development to the patterns that she describes. Thus, the naming of these processes is an original theorisation of boys' faith development that builds upon the patterns of women's faith development identified by Slee.

Section 1.3. outlined the patterns and processes of women's faith development, as identified by Slee, and discussed her main findings and theories. This section shows the extent to which ideas proposed by Slee are used as a framework for aspects of the argument of this thesis. It compares the characteristics of Slee's research constituency with that of my research (1.4.1.), the research design of the two studies and the extent to which Slee's findings are relevant to the study of the processes of spiritual transformation in the lives of boys from prison (1.4.2.). It shows how Slee's patterns of women's faith development can be used as a framework for better understanding the experience of imprisoned children and considers modifications to the theory in light of the data collected in the Philippines (1.4.3.).<sup>338</sup>

#### **1.4.1. Characteristics of research constituencies**

As Slee states: 'It is essential to pay attention to the interlocking forms of discrimination in which race, class, age, sexuality, geographical location and physical and mental abilities play a crucial part alongside gender.'<sup>339</sup> There are contrasting features in the

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<sup>338</sup> See 5.3.

<sup>339</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 3.

constituency of participants in the research carried out by Slee and that undertaken for the purposes of this study.

Firstly, there is the obvious gender difference: Slee interviewed only women. The children I encountered, both in prisons and in the rehabilitation centres were all boys, as were those interviewed in their family homes, because it is rare for girls to be found in prisons in the Philippines.<sup>340</sup> However, because of the traditional roles of women as carers, many staff members I conversed with in prisons and rehabilitation centres were female.

Secondly, there is the age difference. In Slee's research, the respondents were mature adults with evident life experience. Looking back over decades of childhood, adolescent and adult life, they would have the scope to trace patterns and identify periods from a mature perspective and reflect on issues that had influenced their decisions and shaped their thinking. In my research, I interviewed young boys, mostly teenagers, who could speak only of recent months and years. Although invited to describe some of their past experiences, they were generally more focused on the present and the future of their lives than on the past. These adolescents were at earlier stages of development, both psychologically and in faith, than Slee's interviewees.

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<sup>340</sup> I was told that the reasons for this are cultural and social. Girls generally conform to expectations by staying at home and helping with domestic chores or childcare. They do not roam the streets with their peers and therefore rarely get into situations that result in conflict with the law. If they did, they would not be far from home and their parents could easily be fetched to take them back. I was also informed that women's rights groups have succeeded in preventing girls from being kept in prison.

Even staff members, particularly in PREDA, were nearly all under 30 years of age and had worked in the programmes for a relatively short time. Relating to me what they had learned from training and in relation to the boys in their care, their views were based on recent real life situations, not on decades of experience. Since rehabilitation centres for boys from prison are a new phenomenon, adults appeared to be ‘feeling their way’ in trying to implement the new Juvenile Justice Act.

Thirdly, there are marked differences in race, ethnicity and location. Slee’s research participants were all United Kingdom residents, although some had been born, or had lived, elsewhere. Their stories were largely based on life in the western world together with its culture, economy, democratic politics, opportunities and discriminations. My interviewees were nearly all native Filipinos, residing in the Philippines, and knew very little of life beyond the Philippine islands; many would never have left the relatively small island on which they were born. The boys, at least, had almost no exposure to the international news media, though they may have seen some American films. Their stories were localised, grounded in the small world of their existence and based on the assumptions of Filipino culture, economy, politics and everyday life.

Fourthly, there are obvious differences in economic status. The women Slee interviewed were relatively affluent compared with the destitute boys in my study.<sup>341</sup> My young respondents came from shanty-type housing and had lived on the city streets before finding themselves in jail, without money, clothing or possessions. Sometimes they were

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<sup>341</sup> For a discussion of absolute and relative poverty, see Alcock, *Understanding Poverty*, 85-98.



materially better off in jail, where they were provided with some food, clothing and washing facilities. In rehabilitation centres, some boys proudly showed me their lockers, which were not even filled by the sum total of all that they owned. Staff members were different, in that many earned a salary and appeared to enjoy reasonable economic status, compared with the local population.

Further differences between Slee's respondents and mine can be grouped together to form a related set. These concern levels of education, literacy and verbal fluency, allied to which are self-confidence, self-esteem and power. Whereas Slee's respondents were educated, literate and fluent, some of my boys were relatively uneducated, unused to much abstract thought and reflection and were constrained by lack of confidence and self-esteem. Staff members spoke fluent English but some were young and new to their professions and some seemed unused to abstract verbal reasoning:

He did seem a bit unsure and we assured him that we just wanted to ask him what he does and why and things like that. In the event, I felt we were requiring him to think in a way he was not accustomed to ... It's likely that he has not learnt to analyse what he does in a way done in the West.<sup>342</sup>

Some of the women interviewed by Slee had suffered childhood abuse and exploitation in adulthood, bearing some resemblance to the lives of my boys, who had recently suffered traumatic experiences and found themselves in impotent situations. I am aware that in Britain distress, deprivation and depression frequently remain hidden behind

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<sup>342</sup> Field notes referring to an interview with a member of staff, 5/2/2008.

closed doors, giving rise to greater feelings of insecurity and alienation, whereas for those living on city streets it is exposed and accepted as a fact of life.<sup>343</sup> Many of the British women had suffered discrimination, mistreatment and oppression in their lives, whilst the Filipino boys had been stripped of dignity, humanity and hope.

Finally, there is the matter of the correspondence between interviewer and respondents. On a few occasions, Slee reports a degree of difference in perceived status due to race and power difference. In my study, there was greater disparity in this correspondence, especially when interviewing boys. There were contrasts in gender, age, nationality, wealth, education and language; even in interviews with adults, most of these differences pertained.<sup>344</sup>

### **Subsection conclusion**

There are marked differences in the constituencies for the studies compared here. However, despite these social and demographic differences, the common methodology and findings suggest a similarity around the patterns of spiritual transformation. These are explored in 1.4.2.

### **1.4.2. Similarity of research design and findings**

This section shows how Slee's research methodology and findings resonate with the data

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<sup>343</sup> For a discussion of the effects of comparative poverty and exclusion in Britain, see Christina Pantazis, David Gordon and Ruth Levitas, eds, *Poverty and social exclusion in Britain* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2006).

<sup>344</sup> See 2.4.7a) for a detailed discussion of these differences.

collected during my fieldwork in the Philippines. In particular, there are parallels with the ideas of the struggle for identity, alienation and awakenings. There is also an indication of the presence of relationality in the accounts of some interviewees.

### *Similarities and relevance of research design and methodology*

Slee designed her research as ‘a qualitative study using open-ended interviews’.<sup>345</sup> Mine was also qualitative research, often using open-ended interviews, though some were more structured, according to the circumstances, in addition to conversation and participatory and non-participatory observation. Slee’s design was founded on basic principles ‘explicitly grounded in women’s experience’; my research design applies to the experience of boys and their leaders.<sup>346</sup> There are similar uses of reflexivity, writing oneself in the first person into the research account,<sup>347</sup> this being accentuated in my study due to the intensive experience of living and participating in the research field.

Slee observes that ‘the faith experiences, needs and patterns of women have been largely neglected for centuries and require study in their own right, in order to generate the concepts and terms within which that faith can adequately be addressed.’ This is equally true of boys from prisons, in that their needs, thoughts and feelings have been ignored and no account has been taken of their experiences. Slee stresses that her research

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<sup>345</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 52

<sup>346</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 46

<sup>347</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 51-2

methods needed to be non-oppressive, in order to be liberating for women.<sup>348</sup> I researched an ‘oppressed’ group of young males and equally see importance in using non-oppressive methods that ‘seek to ensure that the research process is a humanising and liberating exchange for the participants.’<sup>349</sup> There is a parallel awareness of the inherent problems of interviews in which there is a real or perceived inequality of power, where there could be a risk of alienation rather than the dialogue being therapeutic and empowering.<sup>350</sup>

Slee admits that her research group ‘did not constitute a representative sample’,<sup>351</sup> neither was mine chosen by any scientific method, but rather on grounds of expediency, using participants to whom I was able to gain access. Slee aimed at ‘working from the data itself “upwards” in order to identify themes and relationships’ whilst recognising the complex nature of the ‘relation between theory and data’.<sup>352</sup> My study does the same. Slee concludes that ‘in reality, the process of research design was more one of trial and error than a systematic application of principles’ but that ‘despite the limitations of the methodology and analysis, the research yielded an enormous richness of data’,<sup>353</sup> the same is true of mine.

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<sup>348</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 50

<sup>349</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 50

<sup>350</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 49-51. The manner in which I sought to avert this risk is discussed in 2.5.1

<sup>351</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 54

<sup>352</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 57.

<sup>353</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 60.

Based on her contention that ‘theology needs the wisdom, insights, tools and methods of the arts and humanities and the natural social sciences’, Slee describes her study as interdisciplinary.<sup>354</sup> It draws upon the social sciences in two main ways, making use of both developmental psychology and qualitative research.<sup>355</sup> My study likewise uses social science and psychology, in order to deal with the complexities of the rehabilitation process within a theological understanding.

In the light of these methodological similarities, I proceed to look at the relevance of Slee’s research findings to my study of the processes of spiritual transformation in the lives of boys from prison.

#### *Commonality of findings*

The questions that need to be addressed are whether, given the significant differences in the research constituency, Slee’s faith development theory is applicable to this study and, if so, how her patterns of women’s faith can be used as a framework for my thesis. In response, this subsection examines whether the processes and patterns identified by Slee can be usefully employed in the analysis and understanding of my data derived from imprisoned boys.

Slee found that a dominant type of narrative focused on identity issues.<sup>356</sup> Women spoke

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<sup>354</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 7.

<sup>355</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 8.

<sup>356</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 69.

of the positive and negative influences of their families and schools and culture: their 'identity was worked out, typically, through narratives of affiliation or separation from primary social institutions such as family, school, church, and, to a lesser degree, land and/or culture.'<sup>357</sup> The boys I interviewed likewise set their stories within their relationships with parents or other family members, with their peers and with persons in authority.

As Crompton points out, 'A sense of identity is integral to development, to wholeness, and is easily eroded or even lost under stress or during crisis.'<sup>358</sup> Many boys had lost this sense of identity during the traumas of their early lives, as those who worked with them in rehabilitation were keenly aware.<sup>359</sup> Slee found that sometimes, where cohesion was lacking in the family life, leading to a loss of identity in a child neglected by parents, the emerging woman finds identity in a church setting or through God.<sup>360</sup> Many of the lads I observed were finding this new identity in the rehabilitation centre, which was also 'church' to them, and through a renewed, or at least developing, faith in God, in themselves and in other people.<sup>361</sup>

Slee identified three distinct patterns of faith development: *alienation, awakenings and*

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<sup>357</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 68.

<sup>358</sup> Crompton, 'Working with children', 86.

<sup>359</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 22/02/2008.

<sup>360</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 69.

<sup>361</sup> For example, interview with a group of boys, Grace Home, 16/02/2008.

*relationality*. Each of these can be found to some extent in my data.

Many of Slee's interviewees had a sense of *alienation* arising from a loss of identity due to the effects of childhood abuse.<sup>362</sup> Their stories demonstrated the effects of this abuse, such as 'the erosion of self-worth, depression, anxiety, anger, self-abuse, shame and false guilt, and lack of trust in other people or in the basic security of one's world.'<sup>363</sup>

Boys in my study had suffered significant abuse often in their families and on the streets as well as in the prison system, with similar evident results.<sup>364</sup>

Slee concludes that, 'the women's images suggest the potential for the experience of alienation to become a generating force for transformation'<sup>365</sup> and this experience of 'marginalisation and muteness' could generate 'a new experience of God' and 'the transformation of alienating symbols.'<sup>366</sup> She concludes that this experience of alienation, if 'actively appropriated, consciously owned and linguistically, symbolically and ritually encoded', 'can become a kind of revolutionary force.'<sup>367</sup> Some boys in my study were being encouraged and guided to make a similar transformation from marginalisation and muteness to personal faith and empowerment.<sup>368</sup> As a result of the

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<sup>362</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 105.

<sup>363</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 105.

<sup>364</sup> See 3.2.

<sup>365</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 107.

<sup>366</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 107.

<sup>367</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 107. See also 1.3.3.

<sup>368</sup> See 4.2.1 and 4.2.3.

expression of emotion in trauma therapy and the newfound security of their everyday world, their alienation begins to dissolve as they experience healing and gain a sense of self-worth and empowerment, which transforms their outlook on life.<sup>369</sup>

*Awakenings* is described by Slee as a change that requires renewed perception ‘of self, of reality and of God or one’s core values.’<sup>370</sup> Her data showed that some women had experienced a change from seeing religion ‘as an external, authoritarian system of rules, beliefs and behaviours’ to experiencing a more personal spirituality, which emerged through a ‘process of self-knowledge and awareness.’<sup>371</sup> This, too, has parallels in my study. I highlight the contrast between boys in prison regimes, who hear what staff members and even visiting priests say as a set of rules they should keep,<sup>372</sup> and those in rehabilitation centres who are encouraged at every step to develop a personal faith by means of processes that lead to self-knowledge and awareness of their needs, rights and potential.<sup>373</sup>

Not surprisingly, given their ages and levels of experience, I found no evidence that the teenagers who talked to me in the Philippines had achieved ‘the ability to hold in tension paradox and polarity’ in their faith development.<sup>374</sup> The boys who participated in my

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<sup>369</sup> See 4.2.1. and 4.2.3.

<sup>370</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>371</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>372</sup> 5.1.2. Section conclusion.

<sup>373</sup> See 4.2.1. and 4.2.3.

<sup>374</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 164.



study had not advanced to this Conjunctive stage<sup>375</sup> of faith development,<sup>376</sup> but some had ‘awakened’ to the centrality of faith in their lives, leading to a new vision of their potential for happiness and fulfilment.<sup>377</sup>

*Relationality* is seen by Slee as ‘faith as being in relation with God and/or the Other’ and having a ‘sense of the presence of God at the core of life’ despite, sometimes, a woman’s ongoing ‘inability to believe herself personally loved and accepted.’<sup>378</sup> I have less evidence for this theme in my research data, but some boys I conversed with had developed this understanding of the Christian faith and many others were learning, through psychologically therapeutic means as well as spiritual education, to believe themselves to be loved and accepted.

The belief in ‘the God of justice’<sup>379</sup> and ‘of faith characterised by a strong emphasis on justice and the needs of the other in balance with the needs of the self’<sup>380</sup> is likened by Slee to Fowler’s Faith Stage Five, ‘in which the balance of different needs is held alongside a new quality of openness to the other and a recognition of paradox and mystery.’<sup>381</sup> The staff at the genuinely rehabilitative institutions had a strong sense of a

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<sup>375</sup> The Conjunctive is the sixth stage in Fowler’s stages of faith development. See 1.2.5.

<sup>376</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 40-41.

<sup>377</sup> See 4.4.e)

<sup>378</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 141.

<sup>379</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 143.

<sup>380</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 143.

<sup>381</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 143.

need for justice in the lives of the boys and taught them that one of God's characteristics is compassionate justice.<sup>382</sup> Whilst boys in my study did not articulate such ideas for themselves, many leaders had a strong sense of what needed to be done in order to lead them into developing faith in God, in themselves and in appropriate peers and adults.<sup>383</sup> *Relationality* is seen to be present, to some extent, both as part of the process of *awakening* and working towards *transformation* and as a feature of the enduring state of *transformation*, but its nature differs due to the age and experience of the research participants.

#### **1.4.3. Modifications to Slee's theory**

Due to the youth, inexperience and immature psychological and spiritual development of the boys, some modifications to Slee's theory are required for this study. In the main, modifications that arise from the data apply only to the second and third of Slee's patterns of faith development. In this study, the terms *alienation* and *awakening* are appropriately retained to describe the first two stages. The term *relationality*, used by Slee to name the third pattern identified in her data, is not used here for the third stage experienced by the boys, but the theory is employed to describe the boys' identifiable new-found ability to form, restore or renew relationships with God, self, others and the environment. In the present study, the data indicate that the third process for the boys is more aptly described as *spiritual transformation*, being a step further than *awakening*.

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<sup>382</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA.

<sup>383</sup> For example, interview with a member of staff, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

This term *spiritual transformation* is also used by Slee in referring to the *awakening* pattern of faith development. She describes this state of change as an ‘awakening to new consciousness’,<sup>384</sup> which has a noticeable effect on a person’s thinking and behaviour and in which life takes on a new sense of purpose and meaning. The transformed person experiences a changed relationship with God, with other people and with the world.<sup>385</sup> This transformation involves, as Slee says, ‘a “new naming” of self, of reality and of God or one’s core values.’<sup>386</sup> The state of *spiritual transformation* identified in this study has similar features as this experience of change that Slee incorporates within the pattern of awakenings. It is classified separately because *awakening* appears to be a stage of awareness and transition which could go in any direction (basically progress or regress), whereas *spiritual transformation*, while not a static state of ‘arrival’ is a more stable, secure state that gives hope for a lasting personal change in mindset and lifestyle.

### **Section conclusion**

This section offered a comparative analysis of the extent to which the common methodology and the findings of Slee’s research and of this study are theoretically related. Since Slee’s theory is specifically related to women and developed from a framework of feminist theology and psychology, there is no intention to apply it to men or boys or to claim that such processes and patterns can be found in the accounts or lives of male interviewees. Nevertheless, this section demonstrated a similarity of experiences

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<sup>384</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>385</sup> As shown in 1.1.2.

<sup>386</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

regarding patterns of spiritual change and the existence of parallels with the ideas of the struggle for identity, alienation and awakenings and some indication of relationality in the experience of the imprisoned boys. It established that Slee's theories can be extended to investigate and analyse some of the patterns evident in the transformative process of rehabilitation of imprisoned boys in the Philippines. Thus, despite the differing social and demographic differences in the characteristics of the research constituency, the patterns of women's faith development proposed by Slee can be used as a framework for seeking to understand processes of transformation in the experience of boys from prison.

This theory is developed in three sections, based on the themes of *alienation* (3.2.), *awakening* (4.3.) and *transformation* (4.4.). In each section, the argument is supported by, and illustrated with, examples from the data collected in the Philippines: quotes from interviews with boys and staff members, excerpts from field study notes or statements derived from internal documentation from the organisations. Where appropriate, these examples are compared with stages of faith development identified by previous research and attention is paid to the similarities and differences between these findings. The emphasis in this thesis, however, is on the *process* of spiritual development and how it is encouraged or impeded.

The thesis argues that boys who are imprisoned experience a period of *alienation* during their childhood and adolescence, in the home, in society and in jail (3.2.). When events lead to a realisation of their situation, a sense of spiritual *awakening* can bring about a desire to change (4.3.). The phase of *awakening* may be sudden or gradual; it may be short-lived or long-lasting. At this stage, their circumstances can work either for or

against their ability to develop and sustain changes of attitude and to motivate them towards leading a different lifestyle. When they are able to establish these changes, boys reach a third, more stable stage of faith development, termed *spiritual transformation* (4.4.). This term is used in accordance with my definition of spiritual transformation: ‘a significant positive development in one’s ability to make or find purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, oneself, others and the natural world.’<sup>387</sup> It is seen as a change in mindset and attitudes that comes about when teaching about God, religion or spirituality is internalised.

## **1.5. Thesis outline**

Chapter Two explores the methodology used to collect the research data. Chapter Three describes the prison institutions visited in the Philippines (3.1) and demonstrates the process of alienation experienced by imprisoned boys (3.2.). Chapter Four describes all the rehabilitation centres that form part of the case study (4.1. and 4.2.) and analyses the experiences of boys in these centres in terms of a developed theory of awakening (4.3.) and spiritual transformation (4.4.), comparing these aspects of faith development with those described by Slee. Chapter Five relates experiences of spiritual nurture and transformation to the ways the centres operate and expounds a theory of transformative action (5.1.). It reflects on the relevance of using this theoretical framework in this new context and the implications of the whole study for previous scholarship and future research (5.2.). Finally, it suggests some implications of the findings in relation to policy

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<sup>387</sup> See 1.1.2

and practice (5.3.).

### **Chapter summary**

This chapter defined the pivotal terms and examined the theoretical framework of this thesis (1.1.). It contextualised the study with regard to the overall issue of child imprisonment (1.2.1.), provided background information about the Philippines (1.2.2.) and introduced organisational models of prisons and rehabilitation centres (1.2.3.) It reviewed the scholarship on children and spirituality (1.2.4.) and Fowler and post-Fowler faith development theory (1.2.5). It summarised Slee's theory of women's faith development, focusing on the patterns of faith that she describes (1.3.) discussed the application of Slee's theory to this thesis, and explained the relevance of these findings to the rehabilitation of imprisoned children (1.4.).

Chapter Two discusses the methodology of this study.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology of this research. Section 2.1. outlines the aims and definitions of the research; 2.2. addresses the rationale for employing qualitative research methods; 2.3. describes the processes of preparation for fieldwork; 2.4. explains in detail the fieldwork undertaken in the Philippines; 2.5. discusses the steps taken to ensure ethical research conduct; 2.6. reflects upon the benefits and the limitations of the methodology used.

### **2.1. Aims and definitions**

#### *Aims of the research*

The aims of this research are:

- a) To document the work of governmental and non-governmental organisations in the Philippines to free children from prison and aid their rehabilitation.
- b) To analyse the processes of spiritual transformation that enable children who have been in prison to be successfully rehabilitated.

### *Definition of terms*

For the purposes of this study, *children* are defined as those below 18 years of age, regardless of the age of criminal responsibility in the country in which they live. *Prison* is defined as any place that is designated as a prison or jail by the authorities and any building or compound at which people are held captive in jail-like conditions, even if it is not labelled as a prison by the authorities.<sup>1</sup> The term *rehabilitation centre* is used for any institution that visibly had a programme of rehabilitation for the boys in its care. Since by far the largest majority of children found in both prisons and rehabilitation centres are boys and most are teenagers, the masculine gender is used throughout when referring to children and the words *minors*, *boys*, *children*, *young people*, *youngsters* and *youths* are used interchangeably.

### *Defining the sample*

The main body of data was collected from sample subjects found in two types of governmental and NGO institutions in the Philippines:

- a) Jails
- b) Rehabilitation centres.

The sample subjects from whom information was sought constituted two main groups:

- a) Staff members who led, or were employed in, jails and centres
- b) Young people who were resident, or had been resident, in jails and centres.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to comply with RA9344, some institutions that held CICL had been renamed in ways that suggested they were rehabilitation centres, rather than jails. See 3.1.1.a), 3.1.2.a) and 3.1.3.a) for examples of renamed institutions that retained jail-like conditions.



## 2.2. Qualitative research

### 2.2.1. The nature of qualitative research

Qualitative research is now an accepted way of investigating how people experience the world and how they make sense of it, although, as Roger Gomm found, not all researchers agree as to the definition of qualitative as opposed to quantitative methods, or where to draw the line between them.<sup>2</sup> Whilst this research is not ethnography, per se, principles of ethnographic research were employed to some extent in the collection of data. One characteristic of ethnographic research is that research is undertaken ‘in the field’. Meaning is discovered by experience as well as by questioning, because the researcher studies the research *in situ*. Qualitative ethnographic fieldwork methodology incorporates participant and non-participant observation as well as unstructured interviews and informal conversations.<sup>3</sup> Emphasis is on the process of ‘getting in and getting close to’ the research participants.<sup>4</sup>

Theory and practice are closely interlinked during data collection, in a systematic attempt to understand and explain but, as Dan Albas and Cheryl Albas argue, there may be no precise guidelines as to the right questions to ask.<sup>5</sup> An inevitable feature of

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<sup>2</sup> Roger Gomm, *Social Research Methodology* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 7.

<sup>3</sup> See, amongst others, Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*; William B. Shaffir and Robert A. Stebbins, eds, *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Insider View of Qualitative Research* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> Trevor Welland and Lesley Pugsley, *Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Dan Albas and Cheryl Albas, ‘Experience, Observation and Theory’, in Scott Grills, ed. *Doing Ethnographic Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 140.

ethnographic fieldwork seems to be that theoretical sense gradually emerges during the process of classifying the observations, patterns and relationships, together with an awareness of relevant theory.<sup>6</sup> William Whyte contends that ‘the actual evolution of research ideas does not take place in accord with the formal statements I read on research methods. The ideas grow up in part out of our immersion in the data and out of the whole process of living.’<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Stephen Devereux and John Hoddinott state that ‘In all good fieldwork, the environment itself suggests modifications to the research questions as the work proceeds.’<sup>8</sup> Although no longer than two weeks was spent in any single location, and a total of just five weeks ‘in the field’, the environment frequently suggested further areas of exploration or sometimes a curtailment of intended enquiry.

### *Immediacy*

Ethnographic descriptions are always comparative: researchers compare what they see and live through in the field against their own lives, ideas and expectations.<sup>9</sup>

Ethnography ‘is never just a recollection: it is a reflection of, an examination of, and an argument about experience made from a particular standpoint.’<sup>10</sup> Paloma Gay y Blasco and Huon Wardle stress the central place that is given to ‘immediacy’ in ethnographic

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<sup>6</sup> Albas and Albas, ‘Experience, Observation and Theory’, 140.

<sup>7</sup> William Whyte, *Street Corner Society* 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), Appendix A, 280.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Devereux and John Hoddinott, eds, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 9.

<sup>9</sup> Paloma Gay y Blasco and Huon Wardle, *How to Read Ethnography* (London: Routledge, 2007), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Blasco and Wardle, *How to Read Ethnography*, 9.

accounts, which rely heavily on the presence of the researcher to witness events at first hand and include descriptions of daily life and cyclic rituals, transcripts of diaries, field notes and conversations with informants.<sup>11</sup> This immediacy was a vital aspect of my own data collection, which frequently depended upon my being part of the daily life of my subjects, witnessing events and reflecting upon them in the light of my own experience.

### *Case study research*

Making use of John Gerring's definitions,<sup>12</sup> my study of the major, well-established rehabilitation centre<sup>13</sup> that is central to my research could be described as 'a case study'. This term can also be applied to the other institutions where data were collected, some more intensively than others, to the extent that the whole research based in the Philippines becomes a cross-case study.

### *Data analysis*

Gomm uses the term 'thematic analysis' to describe a type of content analysis applied to recorded data from interviews, conversations in non-interview situations and texts.<sup>14</sup> When themes suggest themselves to the researcher whilst reading the data, a cycle evolves between data and theory, until the analyst decides upon a structure to be used as

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<sup>11</sup> Blasco and Wardle, *How to Read Ethnography*, 78.

<sup>12</sup> John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 20.

<sup>13</sup> The PREDA Foundation Therapeutic Community for Children in Conflict with the Law. See 4.2.3.

<sup>14</sup> Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*, 214.

a framework.<sup>15</sup> This method was used in this study to select themes and build concepts from the raw data collected from observation, interviews, conversations and documentation.

### **2.2.2. Method selection**

Fieldwork in a country or culture, which is not only foreign and different from, but is also poorer than, that to which a researcher is accustomed, brings its own challenges of living, travelling and researching in it.<sup>16</sup> The research tools selected for the fieldwork were participant and non-participant observation, structured and unstructured interviews and informal conversations. In practice, several of these often combined: constant observation of the setting and events took place during the process of interviewing and significant conversations frequently occurred whilst I was participating in activities or observing from the sidelines. It is impossible to separate these methodologies entirely.

The reasons for choosing this combination of methods were:

- a) Fieldwork in a setting foreign to the researchers and in a ‘developing country’ demands extreme flexibility and an opportunistic approach to collecting information.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*, 189-190.

<sup>16</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott examine many of these. See Devereux and Hoddinott, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, 3-24.

<sup>17</sup> Whilst aware that the term ‘developing country’ is problematic, value-laden and hierarchical, I reluctantly retain its use in this study due to its current common usage (see, for instance: Alan V. Deardorff, *Market Access for Developing Countries* Discussion Paper 461, Research Seminar in International Economics, August 2000. <http://www.fordschool.umich.edu/rsie/workingpapers/Papers451->

- b) It was necessary to find effective ways of obtaining information from busy adults who, though co-operative, had little time to devote to the research process.
- c) The need to collect data from uneducated young people, often where they were held forcibly and sometimes where there was suspicion of abuse, required flexibility both to protect the children and to encourage them to talk about their experiences. This flexibility also enabled me to learn about jails opportunistically from those who had left them for a rehabilitation centre.
- d) Since the sensitive nature of the research topic presented an element of danger and potential threat, sometimes a covert or 'soft' approach became vital, as the only alternative to withdrawing altogether.<sup>18</sup>
- e) With experience of similar research settings,<sup>19</sup> I chose methods in which I felt reasonably comfortable and confident and that utilised skills and techniques I had previously found to be successful in building relationships quickly and gaining information and understanding of settings, which were initially alien to me.

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[475/r461.pdf](#) accessed 18/10/2012.) There are no existing definitions set by the World Trade Organization for the term 'developing countries', but current definitions contain these themes: low per capita income by world standards (not necessarily rising), as defined by the World Bank; comparative lack of development with implications of attempts to 'develop' by becoming more industrial; nations of the 'South', primarily former colonies that remain impoverished by a global economy dominated by Northern industrial nations. Interchangeable terms include 'Third World' and 'less developed' countries.

<sup>18</sup> Issues relating to sensitive research are discussed in 2.5.2.

<sup>19</sup> I previously worked in investigative research of small organisations designed to assist 'children at risk' in developing countries.

## **Section summary**

This section explained the nature of qualitative research (2.2.1.) and the rationale for selecting the chosen research methods (2.2.2.).

## **2.3. Preparation for fieldwork**

### **2.3.1. The selection of fieldwork locations**

Expediency and practicality largely prevailed in selecting research locations. For two years before proposing this thesis, I surveyed the field, searching for examples of good practice relating to the rescue and rehabilitation of imprisoned children. Since the PREDA Foundation in the Philippines was initially the only example I could find of a relevant childcare project, I pragmatically began by studying that programme and obtained permission to visit. Having decided to travel to the Philippines, further networking was focused on finding additional centres and on building relationships that would enable visits to jails and rehabilitations centres in that country.

Success in securing assistance in the Philippines became a significant factor in selecting it for a case study and in finding specific fieldwork locations. Continuous networking brought about a meeting with two Filipino nationals, one of whom was a Roman Catholic priest. They located jails and rehabilitation centres in their home areas, approached the ‘gatekeepers’ and arranged the visits made in Cebu and Mindanao. Another opportune find was mention of Ahon sa Kalye<sup>20</sup> in a Viva Network publication,

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<sup>20</sup> See 4.2.1.

shortly before I travelled.<sup>21</sup> Immediate contact resulted in the Ahon sa Kalye leaders assisting me in a significant part of the fieldwork.

The Philippines was linguistically accessible because most adults and young people with some education speak English and, by networking, I was able to enlist excellent independent interpreters for occasions when young participants had limited fluency in English. Other practical considerations included the need to find affordable accommodation and transport whilst in the field: the contacts I made resulted in freely offered hospitality and low-priced lodging and many ‘new-found friends’ also drove us in their private cars or negotiated fair prices with local taxi drivers.

Qualitative research often bases its validity (at least partly) on triangulating data on specific topics from a variety of sources.<sup>22</sup> Originally, I hoped to find suitable fieldwork locations in several countries, for comparison. Despite extensive networking, resource-searching and following numerous tenuous leads, nothing beyond that found in the Philippines presented itself as having reliable potential to enable access or to yield sufficient data. I therefore decided to focus this research on the Philippines and to visit as many different institutions as possible in a single trip. Whilst narrowing the focus precluded the opportunity to compare and contrast data collected in different cultures, it had the benefit for this thesis of being able to examine and to analyse the material in

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<sup>21</sup> Viva Network is a British charity. For more information, see <http://www.viva.org/home.aspx> accessed 4/2/2013.

<sup>22</sup> Albas and Albas, ‘Experience, Observation and Theory’, 133; See also, Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*, 189.

greater detail and depth.

### *Institutions visited in the Philippines*

During a five-week period early in 2008, ten institutions were visited in Olongapo, Manila, Laguna, Cebu City, Argao, Cagayan de Oro, Gingoog, Patin-ay and Butuan, located on the three major islands of the Philippines: Luzon, Cebu and Mindanao. Three institutions were under the auspices of NGOs, three of the DSWD,<sup>23</sup> two of the BJMP,<sup>24</sup> one of a city government and one of a NGO in partnership with government departments. They ranged from jails, where minors spend much of their time locked in barred cells and have little or no programme of activities, to residential centres set in several acres of land, where young people learn vocational skills and undertake devised programmes of rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. The resident population in the institutions ranged from three to about ninety: most were boys aged below 18 who had been in conflict with the law.

#### **2.3.2. Obtaining consent and negotiating access**

Negotiating access to institutions was done in the following ways:

- a) Building relationships in advance, by means of discussions in person and by email and producing appropriate references and credentials.
- b) Promising no disruption and agreeing to conditions, such as bans on taking

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<sup>23</sup> Department of Social Welfare and Development.

<sup>24</sup> Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.



photographs.

- c) Frequently re-iterating my intention to learn from good practice and disseminate it to help others, appealing to people's concern for jailed children globally.
- d) Attaching myself to PREDA and joining a staff group to visit a jail, a police cell, a children's home and the shanty-type homes of three boys. Ahon sa Kalye leaders also took me to visit training centres.
- e) Using intermediaries, (local residents and Roman Catholic priests) to negotiate entry and accompany me into jails and rehabilitation centres which I did not previously know existed.
- f) Where required, seeking official permission and submitting sample interview questions.
- g) Ceding control when necessary, gratefully accepting what was offered and maximising all opportunities. Some hosts directed my activities: one gave a Power Point presentation; another instructed the boys to present a 'show' in which they sang, told their stories and related their changes of life in the centre.
- h) Once inside the research situation, constantly negotiating further access, seeking to understand the culture, being deferential and appreciative, whilst keeping my goals in mind.
- i) Concealing emotion when expedient, but relating to the emotion of participants when appropriate.

*Proceeding with caution*

Scott Grills argues: ‘As the first tentative steps into the field are anticipated, it is important to remember that problems, ambivalences, uncertainties, and apprehensions are a part of the research process.’<sup>25</sup> Even the early stage of making useful contacts and requesting assistance proved stressful due to the necessity to achieve results when much depended upon the co-operation of people with little or no stake in the research. The initial groundwork was undertaken carefully, in the knowledge that there was unlikely to be another chance if the first communication failed. In the event, no-one refused access and most contributed considerable effort in order for the research to proceed.

I worked steadily through a chain of contacts and interviews, using the credentials and goodwill of one to gain access to the next. For instance, I cited my credentials from former research with the Viva Network to arrange an interview with a staff member at Jubilee Action in Guildford, which resulted in much useful background information.<sup>26</sup> Whilst there, I seized an opportunity to explain my research to the founder, Danny Smith, from whom I learnt about Shay Cullen’s forthcoming visit to Essex University and arranged to have an interview with him there. This enabled me to negotiate face to face a visit to PREDA.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Scott Grills, ed., *Doing Ethnographic Research: Fieldwork Settings* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), Preface, v.

<sup>26</sup> See 1.2.1., fn. 52.

<sup>27</sup> Subsequently, Cullen published *Passion and Power* (Turin: Killynon House, 2006). From this autobiography of his work in the Philippines, I was able to increase my knowledge of the Philippines and the research setting prior to travelling.

### *Gatekeepers and guards*

The term ‘gatekeeper’ (familiar in sociology and academic research literature<sup>28</sup>) also holds its literal meaning when visiting jails and centres for detained youth. Even when granted permission to visit by government officials, area bosses or project leaders, we always had to gain entrance past those responsible for allowing or denying access.<sup>29</sup> At jails, which were locked and barred, usually with daunting barbed wire fences and gates or other security measures, this alone could prove difficult and induce anxiety. At CRADLE, for instance, uniformed, armed guards inspected our identification, searched us, relieved us of bags, cameras and mobile telephones then telephoned through to officials while we stood by trying to pose in an acceptable manner. When we reached the main reception office, we were treated as guests and introduced to the staff. Thereafter, we were accompanied by a jail warden, who watched closely and listened to our conversations with the boys.

### **2.3.3. Research assistance**

#### *Sponsors*

Researcher sponsors can perform three major roles: as a bridge, as a guide, or as a patron.<sup>30</sup> Raymond Lee cites the significant sponsor that Whyte had in the person of

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<sup>28</sup> For example: Robert G. Burgess, *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 48-9, 194-7; also John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 26.

<sup>29</sup> The pronoun ‘we’ means ‘my husband and I’, as explained in 2.3.3.

<sup>30</sup> Raymond M. Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics* (London: Sage Publications, 1993), 131.

‘Doc’.<sup>31</sup> The ‘bridge’ forms a link into a new social world, the ‘guide’ charts a way through unfamiliar social and cultural territory and the ‘patron’, by associating with the researcher, helps to secure the trust of those in the setting. In all these roles, a sponsor indirectly secures acceptance for the researcher.<sup>32</sup>

Although, as Raymond Lee says, acquiring a sponsor is not simply a matter of good fortune,<sup>33</sup> and I did make significant efforts in this respect, I am grateful to have found several sponsors who performed all these roles. They fulfilled a vital function in my fieldwork and significantly affected its success. The Catholic priests were particularly useful as patrons, owing to the deference granted them in Filipino society. In places where children were confined in conditions that contravened the law, photography was banned and there was some reluctance to entertain visitors. However, Catholic priests in the Philippines are able to enter many places not accessible to the general public.<sup>34</sup>

The permission granted by its leader, also a priest, to visit and conduct research at the PREDA Foundation, allowed us access to all areas of the CICL programme and secured us a welcome and the trust of the staff and boys. It also qualified us to accompany them on visits to other institutions and afforded us some protection and acceptance in those

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<sup>31</sup> See Whyte, *Street Corner Society*, Appendix A, 291.

<sup>32</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 131.

<sup>33</sup> Raymond M. Lee, *Dangerous Fieldwork*, Qualitative Research Methods Series, Volume 34 (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 42.

<sup>34</sup> This was immediately apparent when, alighting from an internal flight to Mindanao, I was greeted by the priest in the Arrivals building, which was protected by security doors and armed guards against any unauthorised entry.

places, which would have been difficult if not impossible for me to achieve of my own accord. Likewise, the fact that a priest had initially requested our visits in Mindanao seemed to endow us with a share of the respect and trust that he received as a priest. When he accompanied us, doors opened smoothly, we kept hold of our possessions and the staff brought the boys to sit and talk with us, placing no time limit or restraint on our movements. In the final jail, to which we were taken by another priest, a companion even gained permission to take some photographs.

### *Partnership and co-fieldwork*

Partnership in fieldwork, particularly in an alien environment, can greatly increase productivity and be significantly advantageous.<sup>35</sup> For this research, I had the invaluable partnership of a co-fieldworker: my husband, Les.<sup>36</sup> Whilst I had overall control in the design and execution of this field research, Les assisted in the following ways:

- a) He travelled with me from London throughout the Philippines. His companionship served to increase my safety, give practical assistance and prevent loneliness and isolation.
- b) We stayed in guest accommodation, hotels and private homes and accepted invitations to meals and other social occasions, which are easier to manage as a couple. Les participated in the task of building relationships with the numerous adults and children with whom we had contact during this tour.

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<sup>35</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, 26-27.

<sup>36</sup> Thus, the use of plural pronouns in subjective accounts indicates the presence of my husband, who accompanied me during the fieldwork.

- c) Together we carried out individual and group interviews, generally using a loose formula, which we have found successful in the past. Our relationship, based on mutual trust, means we are comfortable working together and we have developed a technique that puts subjects at their ease and encourages them to talk. The presence of three people often made an interview feel more like a sociable, relaxed and friendly discussion.
- d) In many developing countries, it is the norm for men to talk to men rather than to women. In addition, as Devereux and Hoddinott observe, 'If an assistant does all the talking, the researcher can concentrate on writing down responses, taking comprehensive notes and thinking about further areas to probe.'<sup>37</sup> Sometimes it was preferable for Les to ask the questions while I took notes and intercepted only if I felt clarification was necessary.
- e) In both participant and non-participant observation, we saw much more than I could have done alone and were able to combine and compare our impressions and findings. Sometimes one of us would notice more, or even 'snoop' a little, while the other conversed with the 'gatekeeper' or boys.
- f) Les helped me to keep up with my records and reports whilst in the field. We informed and reminded each other of what we had seen and heard and discussed events, conversations and interviews, enabling me to find appropriate explanations, interpretations and further questions, which could

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<sup>37</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, 27.

be followed up promptly.<sup>38</sup>

- g) The dynamics of maintaining relationships in the field require ‘continuous introspective examination by the researcher of his or her feelings and emotions and how these influence the process by which the research unfolds.’<sup>39</sup> This was facilitated by the presence of someone who knows me well and was familiar with the research subjects and setting.
- h) My husband’s presence protected me from the worst consequences of this emotionally draining and physically exhausting research. Talking confidentially helped us to offload the intense feelings generated by our experiences.<sup>40</sup> He nursed me and mediated with our hosts when I became ill.
- i) Living in a foreign land, especially a developing country, involves solving problems regarding transport and other practicalities of everyday life. This applied, even when we had time to relax or to do some essential shopping or laundry in the town. These burdens were reduced by the presence of a partner with experience of living and working in similar locations.
- j) By sharing the intense fieldwork experience with my life partner, I gained the benefit of a personal sounding board and memory prompt during the lengthy process of the analysis and writing-up stages.

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<sup>38</sup> This role is akin to that of the ‘shadow ethnographer’ as described in Pink Dandelion, *A Sociological Analysis of the Theology of Quakers: the Silent Revolution* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), 57-58.

<sup>39</sup> Shaffir and Stebbins, *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Insider View of Qualitative Research*, 148.

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the need for debriefing to relieve researcher stress, see Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 106.

## **Section summary**

This section described the process of preparation for the fieldwork trip to the Philippines. It addressed the selection of fieldwork locations (2.3.1.), how consent was obtained and access negotiated (2.3.2.) and the ways in which research assistance was procured and utilised during the fieldwork (2.3.3.).

## **2.4. Fieldwork methodology**

### **Introduction**

Fieldwork methods comprised a mixture of participant observation, non-participant observation and individual and group interviews, with frequent overlap between two or more of these. For the purposes of analysis, however, they are treated as four separate means of collecting data. 2.4.1. demonstrates the methods employed in different locations. The ways in which the methodology was carried out for the purposes of data collection at each centre is analysed under each of the following subsections.

### **2.4.1. Qualitative methodology used for research in institutions**

Table 2.1. shows the qualitative methods employed at each institution. Table 2.2. shows the duration and nature of the fieldwork visits



Organisation	Participant Observation	Non-participant Observation	Individual Interview	Group Interview	Other Methods
<b>The PREDA Foundation</b>	Yes	Yes	Staff	Boys	Email, newsletters, books, documentation, website, discussion with other visitors, visits to other institutions.
<b>CRADLE</b>		Yes		Boys	Conversations with staff, discussions with other visitors and with previous inmates.
<b>Grace Home, Ahon Sa Kalye</b>	Yes	Yes	Staff Boys	No	Documentation, website, accompanied visits to local training centres and mushroom enterprise.
<b>Argao Regional Centre</b>		Yes	Staff		Documentation.
<b>Balay Pasilungan FREELAVA</b>		Yes	Staff	Boys	Power Point presentation, documentation.
<b>Operation Second Chance</b>		Yes	Staff	Boys	Internet and newspaper reports.
<b>Tahanan ng Kabataan</b>		Yes	Staff	Boys	
<b>Gingoog Regional Centre</b>		Yes	Staff	Boys	Audience to staged presentation
<b>Patinay Regional Centre</b>		Yes	Staff	Boys	
<b>Butuan Provincial Jail</b>			Boys	Boys	Conversation with warden

*Table 2.1. Qualitative methodology used at each jail or centre*

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Time in venue</b>	<b>Staff interviewed</b>	<b>Residents in group interviews</b>	<b>Residents/ ex-residents in individual interviews</b>	<b>Observation and conversation time</b>
PREDA	14 days and nights	13	10, aged 14-19	3, aged 16-18	14 days
Ahon sa Kalye	4 days	2	10,	5, aged 16-20	4 days
Balay Pasilungan	1 day	1	20, aged 13-18	-	1 day
Argao RRCY	2 half-days	2	-	-	2 half-days
Gingoog RRCY	1 half-day	2	6, aged 16-25	-	1 half-day
Patin-ay RRCY	1 half-day plus 1 hour at DSWD office	2	5, aged 15-22	-	1 half-day
CRADLE	2 hours	1	-	-	2 hours
CCOSC office/ jail	1 half-day plus 1 hour at NGO office	3	-	-	1 half-day
Tahanan de Oro	1 half-day	1	26, aged 17-24	-	1 half-day
Butuan	1 half-day	1	-	6, aged 16-18	1 half-day
Totals		26	77	14	

*Table 2.2. Duration and nature of fieldwork visits*

### 2.4.2. Participant observation

Participant observation, as one of many qualitative research tools, is ‘the foundation of ethnographic research design’.<sup>1</sup> It can ‘enhance the quality of data obtained during field research’ and the ‘quality of interpretation of data’ and is useful in formulating ‘new research questions and hypotheses’.<sup>2</sup> In anthropology and social science research, participant observation is a common element of ethnographic fieldwork, in which the researcher lives and works in and with the group to be studied, taking part in the daily activities and practices, informally observing during leisure periods and attempting to absorb the explicit and implicit ethos and attitudes of the community.<sup>3</sup>

George McCall uses the term ‘in a broader sense, as naming not a single method but a necessarily multimethod, mixed-method (quantitative and qualitative) mode of social research in which both participation and observation figure prominently.’<sup>4</sup> Researchers use everyday conversation as an interview technique and they record observations, experiences and thoughts by keeping daily diaries and writing copious notes whilst in the field.<sup>5</sup> It is an advantage, when researching a setting, to be able to live with some of the subjects and take part in their daily lives because ‘involvement adds a dimension to

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<sup>1</sup> Kathleen DeWalt and Billie DeWalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2010), 16.

<sup>2</sup> DeWalt and DeWalt, *Participant Observation*, 16.

<sup>3</sup> DeWalt and DeWalt, *Participant Observation*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> George McCall, ‘The Fieldwork Tradition’ in Hobbs, Dick and Wright, Richard, eds, *The Sage Handbook of Fieldwork* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 4.

<sup>5</sup> McCall, ‘The Fieldwork Tradition’, 4.

understanding which living apart can never provide.’<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the researcher should listen to and watch how people, who know about the world in which they live, adjust to its difficulties and solve their problems.<sup>7</sup> McCall sees the fact that fieldworkers constantly monitor the research process for problems and bias and the synchronistic manner in which design, data collection, analysis and writing up take place as significant defining characteristics of this kind of fieldwork.<sup>8</sup> All these aspects of the process are undertaken on a daily basis whilst in the field.

Arguably, the whole fieldwork trip for this study was an act of participant observation as we immersed ourselves in the life of the Filipino people. Even when not staying with a resident programme, we were living in the culture, staying with Filipinos, eating the food, using public transport, talking to local people and constantly watching, interpreting and discussing our experiences with our hosts, other visitors or with each other. There is no ‘time off’ in such fieldwork: even time snatched for private concerns, such as trying to sleep, do the laundry or enjoy the beach, illustrates the way of life that underpins and determines the data being collected.

Participant observation was valuable in the PREDA and Ahon sa Kalye centres as it enabled me to get close to both subject groups (staff and boys) and to discover important elements in the rehabilitation process. It was rarely possible to use it at other venues

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<sup>6</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Howard S. Becker, *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You’re Doing It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 98.

<sup>8</sup> McCall, ‘The Fieldwork Tradition’, 5.

owing to constraints of time in a single visit but, in some respects, it helped me to learn what questions to ask and, after using it in these two centres, it prepared me to enter more difficult research locations. Both casual and researcher-initiated incidental conversation with individuals was used whenever possible at all locations, even when participation was unfeasible.

At PREDA, we stayed in a guest room for two weeks and participated as far as possible in the daily events and activities with the staff and boys in the CICL programme. This was not long-term covert research as used by Whyte;<sup>9</sup> we were welcomed and introduced as visitors and our research role was made known to the staff and the boys. We attended the daily general staff meeting, which incorporated feedback on the previous day, discussion of coming events and a short Bible reading and prayer. As visitors who wanted to learn about the work of the organisation, we conducted thirteen individual staff interviews and two group interviews with boys. We were frequently invited to explain our motivations and intentions and often did so, even when not requested, in order to allay any fears and to promote a relaxed atmosphere. Staff members tended to treat us as welcome guests: they accepted us as friends and colleagues and committed to co-operating with us as far as their time and ability allowed.

‘Progressive entry’ as described by Lee<sup>10</sup> was possible where we stayed long enough, as

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<sup>9</sup> Whyte, *Street Corner Society*.

<sup>10</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 134-5.

we did at PREDA. This worked especially well with the boys: joining them on outings, for example, helped to build trust, as did maintaining a physical presence around the building and acquiescing to frequent requests to take their photographs, just for fun, or to answer their questions. It worked with staff members, too. One of the advantages of living and working in the scene is that people start to relax and ‘open up’. Residing on the same premises as the staff offices and the original CICL rehabilitation centre, we could call in at any time to enquire what was happening and ‘drop in’ on the boys whenever we wished to have a chat with them and the staff. The nature of our participation was, thus, generally informal.

Robert Burgess discusses the influence of age on the participant observation process, pointing out that studies, such as that of Whyte,<sup>11</sup> assume some correspondence with the boys concerned and the age of the investigator.<sup>12</sup> However, this may not always be a significant factor so long as the researcher fits into some suitably perceived role in the action. At PREDA, we were older than most members of staff and the boys. Staff members treated us with respect, as professionals with more experience on our own territory, but much to learn on theirs.

The boys seemed to regard us rather like visiting relatives who took a personal interest in them and their problems. They liked to teach us Tagalog vocabulary and to practise their English with us. They asked questions about our culture and readily discussed even

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<sup>11</sup> Whyte, *Street Corner Society*.

<sup>12</sup> Burgess, *In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research*, 89.

quite personal matters about themselves, either in English or with interpretation from another boy or member of staff. Nevertheless, they gave us the respect their culture accords white, senior, comparatively wealthy and educated adults. Occasionally, my role changed, too, as when we arrived unannounced to observe the period scheduled as ‘informal education’. The staff member delightedly handed me a textbook and allocated me boys for an English lesson!

The children were accustomed to chatting with foreign volunteers, playing ball games with them and generally ‘having them around’. This helped to make us appear, and feel, more ‘part of the scene’ than might normally be the case in such a situation. The presence of some European volunteers made it easier for us to be accepted and we were generally included in that group. Some, from Ireland, had already been at PREDA for several months. During mealtimes, we took the opportunity to learn from others who had come from abroad, lived in and tried to understand the culture and the problems of the rehabilitation programme. Some of them knew the founder/director, who was absent during our stay; they told us how life at PREDA was different when he was present and explained aspects of Catholicism that influenced the life and work of the organisation.

Outings and expeditions were interesting and informative. We travelled on a dilapidated bus crammed with boys, staff members, large pots of food and drinks and other requirements for the day. The initial journey from one centre to collect boys from the other incorporated errands, such as taking team members and a dog, chairs and gas bottles to the new centre, and even delivering cooked lunches to children in several local schools. A trip to the river involved boys loading bags of dirty washing (and clean,

mostly dry clothes on the return journey). Boys sang and played guitars while the bus rattled its way out into the countryside and down dirt roads. I was never sure what was going to happen or how long it might take. I tried to relax, keep smiling and to take in everything. Notes could not be taken on the scene, but we could speak to each other about what was happening, ask questions of the staff, boys or drivers and record everything soon afterwards.. Experiences were often discussed with volunteers and in subsequent interviews and conversations with staff and boys. Reports were sent home by electronic mail to interested family, friends and colleagues. These form part of the research data, as they show our immediate reactions, analysis and reflections whilst ‘in the field’.

The ‘rapidly rotating wheel’ of design, including formulation and revision of questions and plans, data collection, data analysis and write-up,<sup>13</sup> was a powerful feature of this fieldwork. For example, I had been informed beforehand that the boys at PREDA were situated on the same site as our accommodation, the main facilities and the staff offices. However, on arrival I discovered that many of them had been transferred to a new (unfinished) building which we could only visit by arrangement, and when transport was going there for some other reason. I made arrangements several times, but they failed at the last minute or after much ‘hanging around’ on our part. Consequently, I only succeeded in going twice, once by design and once unexpectedly.

On the planned visit, we showed ourselves around the large shell of the new building

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<sup>13</sup> McCall, ‘The Fieldwork Tradition’, 5.



and the covered parking area where boys slept temporarily on bunks open to the fresh air and wildlife. We joined in lunch and interviewed a staff member, after which my intention to talk with the boys was frustrated as they were watching a film, which I could not interrupt. I had to be content with an impromptu conversation with three men contracted to start the agricultural project and train the boys in basic farming skills. It was always a case of designing the research ‘on the hoof’, being opportunistic minute by minute, but acquiescing with good grace when arrangements failed, in order to maintain good relationships. I constantly had to bear in mind that we were guests, we had no rights and that my purposes were not the main priority of those working in the project.

At the Ahon sa Kalye CICL rehabilitation facility, Grace Home, we were invited into the ‘family’ and we participated in their weekend activities.<sup>14</sup> Observation and conversation with the leaders continued continuously in daytime hours; they were keen to explain everything about their work and I was keen to learn. They introduced me to two training centres attended by their clients and to the mechanics workshop where one was employed. I spent Saturday with them at the house they rent for the boys, discussed their work in detail, interviewed the staff and residents and two boys who had moved on from the programme, had lunch with them all and joined their visits to a shopping centre and a mushroom farm.

On Sunday, I attended two significant evangelical church events, one with the leaders and the second with leaders and boys. Lunch with the leaders, boys, some ex-residents

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<sup>14</sup> We stayed in a local low-priced hotel and were collected early each morning.

and a girlfriend at the huge Mall of Asia provided further interesting data and was followed by an afternoon's shopping and sightseeing, mostly accompanied by constant conversation with youths and/or adults. It was an intensive and exhausting but fruitful four days.

### **2.4.3. Non-participant observation**

Although I have drawn a distinction between participant and non-participant observation as different methods of qualitative research, in fieldwork there was overlap and constant movement between them.<sup>15</sup> Non-participant observation requires researchers to witness situations, listen, and observe closely, even to smell, touch, taste or feel what is happening, but not to participate as an insider. The methodology has advantages and constraints. The research field may be seen, heard and sensed more objectively, though not experienced as in participant observation. It may be easier, less demanding or tiring for researchers, but understanding tends to be more limited. As an analogy, a tourist who stays in a hotel and enjoys 'sightseeing' might see and learn more local history and geography, whereas someone who stays in a native home and lives as one of the family might experience and understand more of the culture and life of the community.

Non-participant observation research is usually less demanding for participants and access to a research scene is more easily negotiated. Participant research is often not practical or feasible and the researcher must accept gratefully permission to visit as an

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of the 'fluidity of the observing role' see Teela Sanders, 'Researching Sex Work: Dynamics, Difficulties and Decisions', in Hobbs, Dick and Wright, Richard, eds, *The Sage Handbook of Fieldwork* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 209.

outsider. However, overt researchers must take into account that the scene may have been ‘tidied up’ especially for the visit and that subjects may temporarily be ‘on their best behaviour’.<sup>16</sup>

Whilst the fieldwork for this study was partially participant research in the sense of ‘doing fieldwork’ whilst living and working with the research subjects, it would be misleading to suggest that it was true insider research, even at PREDA and Ahon sa Kalye. Often we were simply spectators, or at best close observers, like colleagues who show a professional interest in activities and the theory behind them, or sometimes like friends who drop in occasionally for a chat to see how everyone is faring. At PREDA, we tried to join in and become ‘one of them’, but were only occasionally successful, because we were newcomers and there were differences between us in terms of age, ethnicity, culture, education, first language, perceived social and financial status and religion. Our use of humour and general friendliness and courtesy helped us to be accepted on a personal level.

Clearly, participant and non-participant observation were taking place simultaneously whilst we stayed for two weeks at the PREDA project. We would find ourselves moving from one to the other, often without warning and by forces beyond our control. One moment we would be acting as participants, the next find ourselves on the outside. For example, a trip to the river involved riding on the bus with the boys, trekking with them

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<sup>16</sup> For a discussion about trying to maintain the social ecology of a research setting, see Paul Oliver, *The Student’s Guide to Research Ethics* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003), 84-86.

to the river, chatting with them during lunch and while they washed their clothes. Then they would climb the rocks and dive from a height into the pools below, leaving us as observers (but still with the staff) watching from the bank.

At other times, movement would be in the opposite direction, as when we produced a camera to make an 'objective' record of events. I wanted to record ordinary activities, with staff and boys 'being themselves', focusing on what they were doing and demonstrating normal life in the centre. This was always difficult to achieve. The moment a boy spied the camera he would pose, vocally demand a photograph, and plead for 'one more, just one more', wanting to see the results each time. The other boys and sometimes staff members joined in with energy and enthusiasm. To observe and record without participating became impossible and we were back in the realm of relating to the boys and the staff, albeit in the role of 'possessor of the camera'.

We accompanied PREDA social workers to Manila to attend court and to visit the CRADLE jail and a home for street children. We gained access with our 'sponsors' (members of PREDA staff and a few boys who were known to the jail staff), but were not introduced as researchers. We seemed to be regarded as members of the PREDA Foundation, although as foreign visitors, we possibly aroused suspicion and wariness as well as courtesy and respect. We were given an official briefing in the main office and then conducted around part of the site and accompanied to the cells by a prison warder, who stayed within earshot throughout our conversations with boys. The jail had been given the statutory 24 hours notice of our visit so it was impossible for us to know whether or not what we witnessed was normal practice and we dared not ask the inmates

in case of reprisals.<sup>17</sup> Back on the bus, we asked the PREDA boys who had previously been in the jail about conditions there. Their stories showed that either things had changed extremely recently or we had not witnessed a true picture. The trust we had built with the PREDA boys and staff paid off in such situations.

A mix of participant and non-participant observation was employed at Ahon sa Kalye. The leaders of this small grassroots project, members of the Protestant minority in the Philippines, welcomed me as author of the Viva Network training handbooks.<sup>18</sup> They arranged our accommodation, transported us in their car and ‘entertained’ us for four days of intensive observation of their programme. The young clients were no longer minors so there were no problems about us interviewing them, taking photographs or even exchanging email addresses. I had a brief respite from ‘thinking on my feet’ while they showed and told us all they could. They talked at length about their work and were frank about their problems, doubts and difficulties as well as their hopes and aspirations.

After leaving the main island of Luzon and these two projects, our schedule became tighter and my control of situations became more fragile. We toured several parts of the islands of Cebu and Mindanao and visited jails and rehabilitation centres for shorter periods, ranging from about one to three hours, allowing little time for participant observation, except occasionally in short bursts. Sometimes we tried to be informal and merge into the scene, but were not often successful. At some locations, we were treated

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<sup>17</sup> It is possible that we ‘affected’ the research scene. See 2.4.7. and 2.6.

<sup>18</sup> These were based on examples of good practice in Christian ministry to ‘children at risk’.

more formally as official visitors and occasionally even presented with a prepared show. Data collection during a visit to Balay Pasilungan included viewing photographs of life at the centre and three Power Point presentations, talked through by one of its officers, who also answered my questions. He allowed me to have copies of all the presentations and make supplementary notes during our discussion. After a guided tour accompanied by resident boys, about twenty boys sat and talked about their experiences at Balay Pasilungan. In rehabilitation centres, photography was welcomed or accepted, sometimes on condition that no minors would be identifiable in any published pictures.

At Tahanan ng Kabataan, rough wooden benches were placed in the dirt area for the boys to sit on, with three plastic chairs for us, while we talked with them. There was a split bamboo shelter with a wooden centre table and seating, on which we sat for the staff interview. With a priest to interpret, I was allowed to address and question all the boys together and subsequently to interview a member of staff and a small group of long-stay residents in the presence of that member of staff. At the bigger jails, we were kept at a slight distance from staff, boys and close scrutiny of conditions.

In the government jails and centres, visits and interviews had to be arranged in advance and usually negotiated with tact and care, either by us or by our sponsors who orchestrated them. In most of the jails, a stipulation against taking photographs accompanied acceptance of our request to visit. We visited the provincial jail in Butuan, accompanied by the Prison Apostolate and the sister of a priest. The Apostolate was a regular visitor there and was able to negotiate access and act as interpreter during my visit. He obtained permission for me to bring the boys into the reception area in a group

and call upon them one by one to talk with us. I interviewed four minors and two young men who had been minors at the time of their arrest.

#### **2.4.4. Interviews in qualitative research**

The interview techniques used in this research fieldwork relate to four of the nine varieties of qualitative interviews demonstrated by Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin:

*ethnography, organisational-culture, theory-elaboration and evaluation/ action research.*<sup>19</sup> *Ethnography* describes a cultural setting, demonstrating its key norms, symbols, values, traditions, and rituals, and shows how they interconnect.<sup>20</sup>

*Organisational-culture research* uses focused ethnographic study of an organisation to comprehend the unwritten rules of behaviour that are inherent in stories, shared metaphors and initiation lessons.<sup>21</sup> *Theory-elaboration research* interviews study specific cases to learn more about the general significance of common themes.<sup>22</sup>

*Evaluation research* and *action research* are intended to assess the effect of programmes and policies for the purpose of initiating improvements.<sup>23</sup>

The main purposes of using interviews as a research method in this study were:

- to learn from participants how the programmes in the jails and rehabilitation

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<sup>19</sup> Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, rev. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), Table 1.1.

<sup>20</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 7.

<sup>21</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 8.

<sup>22</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 9.

centres operate (*ethnographic*)

- to understand the rationale behind their activities (*organisational-culture*)
- to sift out the main themes that can be used to generalise from the particular to the universal (*theory-elaboration*)
- to find out what works well in order, ultimately, to encourage improvements in provision for imprisoned minors (*evaluation and action research*).

Significant data for this study were collected by means of ‘in-depth’ interviews, the key features of which are described by Rubin and Rubin as building on a naturalistic, interpretative philosophy, in which the interviews are extensions of ordinary conversations and the interviewees are partners in the enterprise rather than subjects to be tested.<sup>24</sup> There may be a basic sequence of themes to be covered, as well as some suggested questions, but the interviewer retains flexibility. Sequences and forms of questions can be changed in order to follow up responses of interviewees.<sup>25</sup>

Researchers do not exercise complete control, but have to impose some structure, introduce topics and keep the conversation focused on a limited number of concerns.<sup>26</sup> By means of *main questions, probes* and *follow-ups*, researchers tease out the deep, detailed and rich data that are rooted in the interviewees’ first-hand experiences and form the material to be collected and synthesised. They listen for and explore key words,

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<sup>24</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 12.

<sup>25</sup> Steinar Kvale, *Doing Interviews* (London: Sage Publications, 2007), 51.

<sup>26</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 13.



ideas and themes and encourage the interviewees to explain or expand on these by using follow-up questions.<sup>27</sup>

This type of interview has a flexible design with no predetermined agenda: it becomes a conversation or discussion involving active listening on the part of the researcher rather than aggressive questioning.<sup>28</sup> As the interview progresses, ideas and themes emerge. Interviews often take place after participant observation to obtain explanations of what has been seen. The researcher elicits stories from respondents and, whilst making choices as to what to include, records precisely what is said.<sup>29</sup>

This flexible method was characteristic of the interviews undertaken with staff members and boys during the fieldwork in the Philippines. They were loosely structured in the manner described by Gomm:

For a loosely structured interview there will usually be a list of topics the researcher hopes to cover, though in no particular order, and with no particular wording. Since each interviewee is regarded as being different it makes sense to treat each one of them differently.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 13.

<sup>28</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 9.

<sup>29</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 10.

<sup>30</sup> Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*, 174.

### *Accumulation and comparison*<sup>31</sup>

In general terms, the aims of the qualitative interviewing were:

- a) to accumulate information from different sources in order to build up a picture of the whole situation
- b) to compare responses in different situations in order to assess the differences in approaches and outcomes.

Early interviews and conversations with many staff members enabled me to:

- a) ask the same questions of several different respondents and compare responses
- b) ask questions about the project, which I had previously studied alone<sup>32</sup>
- c) gain an understanding of how people work in this kind of programme, which helped me to formulate questions and promote discussion in briefer, later interviews elsewhere
- d) learn about the native culture
- e) develop ways of relating and communicating, which made it easier to gain results in other settings where I had less time.

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<sup>31</sup> These terms are used by Gomm. See, Gomm, *Social Research Methodology*, 174.

<sup>32</sup> For instance, on the PREDA website and from printed and internet resources.

In addition, informal interviews in the UK were used extensively in the design and preparation stages and in later stages of developing the theory, conclusions and implications of the thesis.

#### **2.4.5. Individual interviews**

Individual interviews were undertaken with staff members at all places except CRADLE and Butuan jail, where only brief conversations were possible. Individual interviews were sometimes used for listening to boys. At the Grace Home, I interviewed the youths individually, with the facilitation of a leader. At Butuan jail, the priest arranged for the group of minors to be taken from their cell and then brought each to us for interview. During visits made to the homes of boys who had left PREDA, I spoke with each, with a member of PREDA staff to facilitate.

Where possible, interviews with adults were set up in advance. Sometimes this was a general arrangement and I did not know exactly who would be available for interview until it was about to happen. Even when meetings had been scheduled months or weeks in advance, I could find at the appointed time that the interviewee had been ‘called away’. I would then attempt both to reschedule the original interview and to talk with whomever I could find on the spot at the time. When arranging interviews I gave a brief, general idea of what to expect. In some instances, I was required to submit questions in advance, not only to the interviewee but also to that person’s superior. I found that this was normally a formality and the interviewee was no more ‘prepared’ than those who had not received any questions in advance. Likewise, information I sent regarding our identities and the nature and purpose of my research always had to be explained again at

the start of interviews or visits.

Generally, I worked without written questions; we simply encouraged the person to talk and posed occasional questions or comments to show interest, to keep the ‘conversation’ flowing, to clarify something or to maintain focus. Interviews were thus unstructured and varied considerably according to the interviewee’s personality, role, confidence and ease of communicating. In general terms, an interview opened with brief social exchanges, an explanation of ourselves and our purposes and an assurance that we were there to learn from their experience and expertise, and not to judge or criticise. We then posed a few ‘starters’, such as ‘How long have you been working here?’ ‘What is your position/ role here?’ or ‘Could you tell us what your job involves?’

These were followed by encouraging comments and questions designed to clarify information, or perhaps to compare it with, or add to, something heard from another person. Prompts would be used where necessary to maintain flow or keep focus, such as, ‘What is the routine of a typical day?’ After this, specific information was sought to expand upon those topics already mentioned or others that came to mind. Follow-up questions had a fluid nature, carefully geared to the personalities involved and a spontaneous assessment of the extent to which we could probe further without threatening the respondent’s equilibrium.<sup>33</sup> At some point while there was still plenty of time available, the topic of ‘spiritual transformation’ was raised in some way and the respondent was encouraged to explain what it meant to him/ her and how it related to

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<sup>33</sup> See 2.5.2. for a discussion of sensitive research and 2.5.3. regarding power dynamics.

rehabilitation.

#### **2.4.6. Group interviews**

A group interview produces qualitatively different data from that obtained in an individual interview.<sup>34</sup> Although there is a possibility that one respondent may dominate others, this can normally be regulated gently by the researcher. Potential benefits include information about how several participants perceive the same event and the generation of more comprehensive data as they fill in one another's gaps and memory lapses and reveal common understandings and differences in the kind of knowledge held by each. Interviewing more than one person helps to establish rapport and an atmosphere of confidence and may help to give a voice to those who might otherwise be silent.<sup>35</sup>

For similar reasons, group interviewing was chosen for most occasions when talking to boys. It enabled quieter and 'newer' boys to see the example of others and have the confidence to speak. It avoided any potential accusation of favouritism or unfairness or, conversely, of one or two being 'picked on' or stigmatised by being selected. It was also a pragmatic choice as it allowed me to collect rich and varied data in a short space of time and, where a member of staff was needed to 'chaperone' the boys or act as facilitator and interpreter, it relieved the burden that would have been incurred with many individual interviews. In practice, a group interview usually became a discussion

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<sup>34</sup> Hilary Arksey, 'Collecting Data through Joint Interviews', *Social Research Update* 15 (Guildford: University of Surrey, 1996).

<sup>35</sup> Arksey, 'Collecting Data through Joint Interviews', unpaginated.

session with either a small group or the whole community of boys and was fitted into their programme as such.

I used group interviews to collect data from boys at all the jails and rehabilitation centres except for Ahon sa Kalye, Argao Regional Centre and the Butuan Provincial Jail, as shown in Table 2.1. At PREDA and Ahon sa Kalye, we were able to develop ways of relating to and communicating with the boys, with the help of good facilitators; this experience made it easier to gain results in later settings where there was less time.

Interview procedures varied widely. At PREDA we interviewed two separate groups at some length, at Balay Pasilungan the whole community (the boys invited to speak while staff sat with them), but in CRADLE we had to speak with groups of boys as best we could through the bars of their cells. At Argao, we conversed informally with a group of boys as we were shown the premises and at CCOSCC, little direct conversation was possible with the jailed boys.<sup>36</sup> At Tahanan, our priest sponsor gathered all 27 boys in a semicircle and facilitated my discussion with them. We then selected some long-stay residents for a more in-depth group interview.

All these group interviews were loosely structured and many were more in the nature of discussions or even social visits. Depending on whether or not this was our first meeting with the children, we would begin with some attempts to ‘make friends’ and then introduce ourselves and our reasons for asking them questions. In the jails, making

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<sup>36</sup> Explained in 2.4.7. fn41.

friends included giving them bread rolls or cakes and sodas, which they readily consumed. In rehabilitation centres where extra food was unnecessary and would have wasted time, we achieved friendship by smiling and showing interest in them as people and in their activities. All these boys were away from home and families and had suffered hardship, neglect and abuse. Many of them craved attention and complained of boredom. The presence of visitors to talk to them and listen to their thoughts and feelings, both as therapeutic listening and as a diverting activity, temporarily satisfied some of their needs. As many researchers have found, being interviewed can be a cathartic experience.<sup>37</sup>

An individual or group interview with minors began with a simplified explanation of my purposes and an assurance that they did not have to say anything unless they wanted to. Then each child who volunteered to answer was asked questions such as:

- How old are you?
- How long have you been here?
- What was your life like before you came here?
- Were you at home, living on the streets or in prison?
- Can you tell us about it?
- What happened that caused you to be brought to this centre?

Following this, a group discussion was encouraged and steadily guided with questions

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<sup>37</sup> See, for example, Janice M. Morse and Peggy Anne Field, *Nursing Research: The Application of Qualitative Approaches*, 2nd edn. (Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes, 2002), 75.

such as:

- What do you like about being here?
- What do you enjoy doing the most?
- What don't you like about being here?
- What do you enjoy least?
- What do you miss from your life outside?
- Do you think that being here will help you when you leave?
- What have you learned here that will help you later?
- Have you learnt anything else here that will help you when you are grown up?
- Have you changed in any way while you have been here?

Although I did not initiate discussion about spiritual matters, when *spiritual change* or *moral education* or *formations* were mentioned by the boys, this topic was probed at greater depth. Finally, I often asked:

- What are your dreams?
- When you are grown up, if you marry and have children of your own, how will you treat them?
- What will you try to teach them?

The intention was to detect the boys' attitudes and mindset after their time in the programme. It was interesting to see how readily they answered such questions, as though they had already given such matters some thought.



## **2.4.7. Methodological challenges**

### **Introduction**

This sub-section reflects upon and evaluates the nature of the data collection and the status of accounts. It considers, in retrospect, the methods adopted and their limitations and examines the validity of the findings in the light of these limitations. It discusses, in turn, the interpersonal dynamics of interviews, linguistic constraints and data recording.

The research was designed to meet two aims, which were, broadly, to gain information about practice incarceration and rehabilitation of imprisoned children and to gain understanding of processes of spiritual change within this context.<sup>38</sup> Information was gleaned by several methods: reading internal and public documentation, interviews with members of staff and some boys in a range of institutions and observation of practice. Understanding was sought by the same means, supplemented with interviews and conversations with boys within institutions and some who had moved on, and conversations with staff members and other informed adults.<sup>39</sup> The research design enabled comparisons to be made between various locations, types of institution, groups and individuals, in order to build as full a picture as possible within the physical and time constraints of the fieldwork.

Inevitably, some methodological challenges are encountered in the course of such

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<sup>38</sup> See 2.1. For interview aims see 2.4.4.

<sup>39</sup> Such as priests, NGO personnel, ex-prisoners, foreign visitors and members of AKBAY.

complex fieldwork and it is vital to consider the reliability and validity of evidence collected by means of these mixed methods of interviews and participation. There is a range of literature that deals with such research, particularly in the field of ethnology.<sup>40</sup> Wayne Fife, for instance, claims that awareness of this ‘wider context of ethnographic knowledge’ allows for interpretation of information gathered through interviewing techniques.’<sup>41</sup>

### ***a) Interpersonal dynamics***

#### *The presence of authority figures*

As Hopkins and Bell observe: ‘the geographical location where research takes place is important, exerting significant influence over the research process and its outcome.’<sup>42</sup>

Fieldwork in institutions for CICL inevitably created particular dynamics and challenges; accompaniment by various authority figures added another dimension. Ethical considerations necessitate the presence of responsible adults but these can create further constraints. The data could be affected by having prison guards, priests, strangers or staff members present during interviews.

#### *Presence of prison guards*

The presence of prison guards could have a restraining effect on boys, who may be

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<sup>40</sup> Wayne Fife, for instance, describes methods for macro and micro-levels of research, based on his experience of field research in Papua New Guinea. Wayne Fife, *Doing Fieldwork: Ethnographic Methods for Research in Developing Countries and Beyond* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

<sup>41</sup> Fife, *Doing Fieldwork*, 91.

<sup>42</sup> Peter E. Hopkins and Nancy Bell, ‘Interdisciplinary perspectives: ethical issues and child research’, *Children's Geographies*, 6, no. 1 (2008): 4.

afraid of them or simply not wish to be conspicuous, and on researchers and interpreters. I was particularly careful when asking questions of boys in jail, being aware of possible negative consequences for them and for myself. However, inhibiting effects are themselves part of the data, underlining negative aspects of life in prison. I did not witness any specific instances of abuse. However, reports (from boys, the media and staff members elsewhere) of ill-treatment led to concern that interviewees might be fearful of consequences if something they said led to unwelcome attention by the media or authorities. I witnessed actions that indicated exertion of power, such as demands from jail staff that boys crouch down to receive instructions: such actions emphasise the contrast between those standing (prison staff and visitors) and those crouching (prison inmates).<sup>43</sup> Such challenges not only affect the data, they form powerful data in themselves: fear of reprisals or caution regarding free expression could themselves be evidence of the alienation process.

For ethical reasons, I took the responsibility upon myself to keep safe boundaries in interviews, according to which people were present. In practice, assurances of personal anonymity and the atmosphere of trust were generally such that boys and adults spoke willingly, but they may have withheld information that they felt might be damaging. I believe the data I have used in the analysis to be reliable; in some instances, where there were clashes, this has been explained in the thesis.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See 3.1.1. and 3.1.2.b).

<sup>44</sup> For instance, where staff members told me that regular activities took place but observation notes and other data brought this into question. For an example, see 3.1.1.b).

Where there are different points of view it is essential to interview both sides<sup>45</sup> and observation of all parties in a 'multidimensional Power relationship,' offers 'additional insight into the structural constraints experienced'.<sup>46</sup> Using a similar strategy, I observed and interviewed different dimensions in two distinct ways: firstly I investigated both service providers (adult staff) and service users (residents); secondly, I investigated in both jails and rehabilitation centres. This 'multidimensional' fieldwork produced valuable insights that added to the theory development.

Data gleaned from jails was backed up by, and cross-checked with, reports from NGO and government staff members, who frequently visit jails and speak to boys, and reports from boys who had been imprisoned. Because there was never an atmosphere of fear or restraint in any of the rehabilitation centres, they proved safe places in which to question boys about the jails. Thus vital data was gained about jail conditions from observation, from other sources and from boys in the safety of rehabilitation centres. 'Suspect' evidence was cross-checked for reliability and deficiency of interview data in jails was compensated by reports elsewhere. Andrew Kendrick, Laura Steckley and Jennifer Lerpiniere say that, although young people in residential care are vulnerable, they 'also possess strengths, competencies and resilience. We have much to learn from their experiences and perspectives, both generally and surrounding their time in care.'<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 68-70.

<sup>46</sup> Ping-Chun Hsiung, 'Between Bosses and Workers: The Dilemma of a Keen Observer and a Vocal Feminist', in Diane L. Wolf, ed., *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 127-9.

<sup>47</sup> Andrew Kendrick, Laura Steckley and Jennifer Lerpiniere, 'Ethical issues, research and vulnerability: gaining the views of children and young people in residential care', *Children's Geographies*

Fieldwork in jails was justified and valid. It would in any case have been unthinkable, given the focus of this research, not to visit children in jail.

### *Presence of priests*

Employing a priest as a sponsor or interpreter might potentially introduce further constraints. Priests are trusted but known to have a religious and righteous standpoint, and to arrive with one could indicate my own standpoint. Boys might want to present a good picture of themselves or they might feel constrained not to complain in front of a priest, respected as figures of authority. Similar constraints might occur when a programme leader or staff member is present. Alternatively, they might take the opportunity to complain to gain sympathy or some benefit. I noticed, though, that in the Philippines, whether or not a priest was present, people, especially in RRCY and NGO centres, were comfortable talking about religion and spirituality.

Where possible, interviewees were given time to develop some rapport with the researchers.<sup>48</sup> Clearly, this research was conducted in some instances with vulnerable subjects. However, no-one was pressurised into participating or saying anything more than they wished to. Interviewees generally expressed pleasure or gratitude that they had had an opportunity to talk and be listened to.<sup>49</sup> Whilst there were constraints on questions to be asked in some circumstances, and I had no wish to make unreasonable

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6, no. 1 (2008): 79.

<sup>48</sup> For comment on the value of this practice, see Kendrick et al., 'Ethical issues, research and vulnerability: gaining the views of children and young people in residential care', 89.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, 4.4.

demands, the majority of young people did speak freely and fully when asked questions. The status of accounts is validated by means of the cross-case study. Despite the challenges discussed here, the research strategy was successful in yielding abundant valid data for analysis.

### **Researcher effects**

In qualitative interviewing, the researcher forms a relationship with the interviewee.<sup>50</sup> Steinar Kvale describes the interview as an ‘interpersonal situation’, in which ‘knowledge is constructed between two people’.<sup>51</sup> This knowledge is produced by the interaction created in the ‘specific situation’ and could be different with a different interviewer.<sup>52</sup> Characteristics of the researcher inevitably influence this interaction and have potential to affect the data. This sub-section discusses in turn my own potential influence on the data collection in terms of gender, age, race and social class.

### *Gender issues*

For some decades, feminist researchers argued that it is less oppressive for women to be interviewed by a woman, rather than by a man, on the basis that men have a higher sociological status, which increases the power differential between interviewer and interviewee.<sup>53</sup> Others have argued against taking such an unequivocal view because

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<sup>50</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 3-4.

<sup>51</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 13.

<sup>52</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 14.

<sup>53</sup> See Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 26.

exploitation is not inevitable because there is a power differential: 'Exploitation occurs when the fieldworker uses her advantage to gain her goals at a real cost to the women she is studying.'<sup>54</sup> Qualitative interviewing methods are preferred to standardised, closed-question methods because they allow participants (whether male or female) free expression.<sup>55</sup> The women staff members whom I interviewed mostly enjoyed sharing their knowledge and were not exploited. Indeed, there was often a sense of shared gender that would soften any hierarchical relationship. I concur with Rubin and Rubin's view that: 'A little humor, warmth, attention, and support can make the interview rewarding for the conversational partner. Ideally, the interview experience should leave interviewees better off'.<sup>56</sup>

I feel it may have been an advantage to be a woman when interviewing boys in the rehabilitation centres because they were accustomed to being 'mothered' by their female carers.<sup>57</sup> However, in neither scenario did the presence of my husband seem to detract from this. I believe this was because as a mature couple, chatting with a small group of boys, we presented an informal, unthreatening little party.

Pranee Liamputtong notes that gender differences between the researcher and the researched play an important role in conducting research and that some have assumed

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<sup>54</sup> Margery Wolf, 'Musings from an Old Gray Wolf', in Diane L. Wolf, ed., *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 217.

<sup>55</sup> Raymond M. Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics* (London: Sage Publications, 1993), 108-9.

<sup>56</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 34.

<sup>57</sup> See 4.3.

that women should only be interviewed by women.<sup>58</sup> However, the Philippines society, as I witnessed it, was not segregated along gender lines, as many are. Women can be employed in high-status occupations in politics, law, education and other professions. At the time of my research, the president was a woman.<sup>59</sup> Staff members could be male or female, in jails as well as rehabilitation centres. Lower status roles and higher status roles were filled by either. Boys were accustomed to both women and men in roles they could trust, such as houseparents. Catholic priests were male but members of visiting Christian groups were of mixed gender. The main role difference I observed was that, on outings with the PREDA boys, male staff members would be cajoled into playing ball games, whereas women undertook the catering and chatted with boys. There was, however, a cultural difference in the treatment of boys and girls that was strong enough to prevent me from including girls in this study.<sup>60</sup>

As a woman, I found that mutual respect was a keystone of interaction with both males and females. There was no occasion when I felt uncomfortable, or observed that interviewees were uncomfortable, due to personal differences. The only discomfort arose, in some jail staff interviews, from unspoken (on my part) differences of opinion, or perspective, on the issues raised and from the emotional impact of the boys' suffering. These issues do not detract from the findings; rather, they form an intrinsic part of the data.

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<sup>58</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 123.

<sup>59</sup> Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was President of the Philippines at the time of my fieldwork. She held office from January 2001 until June 2010.

<sup>60</sup> As explained in 1.4.1.fn 340.



### *Age differences*

Likewise, although our age might have increased the differences between us, being so far senior might give us an advantage that a younger adult, particularly a male, might lack. As Liamputtong says: 'In many cultures, advanced age signifies respect'.<sup>61</sup>

Boys might feel that could be more honest with benevolent aunt/uncle figures than a younger adult to whom they might feel the need to prove their masculinity. In PREDA, where there was more time to build relationships, boys constantly approached either or both of us to engage in conversation and request photos.

### *Socio-economic status*

Some researchers have found that social class differences can create barriers to understanding.<sup>62</sup> I rarely encountered this because most of the adults I interviewed were in professional employment of some kind and many were qualified lawyers, psychologists, social workers, pastors or nurses. Their norm was to dress in European/American styles, although often dressed smartly for work whereas I dressed for comfort, travelling in unaccustomed heat. My lifestyle in the Philippines largely matched theirs, in terms of diet, transport, dress and general behaviour. Conversation, outside of interviews, was easy and wide-ranging. English is widely spoken and is the language of education. The major religion is Christian, the cultures have much in common and British people are held in respect, though often as a source of funding for charitable work. Thus I believe that I was welcomed by all adults as an equal and there

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<sup>61</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 128.

<sup>62</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 126-7.

was rarely a ‘power advantage’ on either side. My attitude was that of the interested visitor who seeks information and understanding from those who have superior knowledge and experience, employing what Kvale calls “‘qualified naïveté’, being curious and sensitive and thus open to new and unexpected phenomena.”<sup>63</sup> In jails, particularly, since I was the one on foreign soil, often ‘thinking on my feet’ and sometimes surrendering my passport, some sense of equal status gave me much-needed confidence to gain useful data despite the daunting circumstances.

Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin say the literature suggests that ‘middle-class interviewers do better in working-class settings if they start with a period of participant observation’ because ‘those being studied take it upon themselves to explain or interpret particular occurrences’.<sup>64</sup> This is akin to what happened when I was with the Ahon sa Kalye project. I am sure it would have been effective in the following situation, too, but definitely impractical. Socio-economic differences were most apparent when I visited boys’ homes in the Manila slums. It was hard for me to grasp how a family could live in such a tiny, meagre home but it became obvious why teenage boys spend so much time on the streets. Fortunately, I could ‘ride’ upon the relationship already existing between the family and the PREDA social workers who took me there and interpreted. Rubin and Rubin contend that interviewers can cross social boundaries and have different styles of

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<sup>63</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 113.

interviewing to good effect.<sup>65</sup> In this extreme instance, the style that I adopted worked.

### *Race and Culture*

Liamputtong cites examples in cross-cultural research where insider/outsider status has been affected by race or cultural issues.<sup>66</sup> There was no doubt that my ethnic origin contrasted with those of my interviewees. Rather than creating a barrier, this contrast created opportunities for more explanations than might otherwise have been proffered. For example, a leader of Ahon sa Kalye took us to an area where people lived in makeshift homes beside a railway track. He explained the political and social reasons why they lived like this and we discussed the impact it had on boys who later came into conflict with the law. Cultural differences also sometimes occasioned humorous exchanges, which increased rapport<sup>67</sup> Like Paul Maginn, I adopted a ‘strategy to induce a sense of familiarity, similarity and sympathy among gatekeepers and informants towards my research and me.’<sup>68</sup>

### *Interviewee preconceptions*

A potential difficulty in interviewing young people was encouraging them to talk freely rather than just respond to questions. Preconceived ideas can affect interview responses.

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<sup>65</sup> Rubin and Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn., 39-40.

<sup>66</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 109-121.

<sup>67</sup> Field notes, Butuan, 28/2/2008.

<sup>68</sup> Paul J. Maginn, ‘Negotiating and Securing Access: Reflections from a Study into Urban Regeneration and Community Participation in Ethnically Diverse Neighborhoods in London, England’ *Field Methods* 19, no. 4 (2007): 431.

My being introduced, in jails and rehabilitation centres, by a staff member or a priest, bore the risk that I might be seen as an ‘authority figure’. However, I believe that this was outweighed by the impression they received that I was a ‘trusted adult’: I dressed and behaved informally, explained how I needed their help, smiled and listened to them, with genuine concern. In most cases, the boys seemed relaxed in the interviews, which were held as an informal conversations or group discussion. The word ‘interview’ was never used for minors: they were invited to sit in a small group and chat with us. Participants of all ages took the interviews seriously but did not appear to be afraid or intimidated. Boys always appeared to be enjoying themselves. A few of the young staff members were nervous initially but we were soon able to put them at their ease.

There is always concern that participants might deliver rehearsed answers, ‘toeing the party line’ of the institution or, maybe, giving the ‘right answer’ to please a researcher, priest or staff member.<sup>69</sup> Aware of this possibility, I often cross-checked facts across different interviews and locations. Occasionally, boys in group interviews might respond with words or phrases they had learnt in specific contexts. For example, several said: ‘I was led astray by my peers and I became stubborn.’<sup>70</sup> These were not necessarily ‘rehearsed’, but some boys had discovered, and thus articulated, a shared master story.<sup>71</sup> I found the assistance of a priest to be valuable in drawing out boys to talk about their experiences. The priests I employed were empathic and able to encourage boys to speak

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<sup>69</sup> See discussion about the ‘halo effect’ in 2.5.3.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>71</sup> See 5.2.2.a) for more about these ‘master stories’.

truthfully (maybe because of the confidential confession practices of Catholicism). Boys were not asked about their crimes; they were asked about their experiences, why they would keep going back to jail, what they had learnt in centres, how it helped them and their hopes for the future. The situation was non-threatening and there was no reason for them not to speak truthfully.

Some staff members were also young and had been trained in the institution. Such training involves learning the professional ‘jargon’, a new ‘language’ that is specific to the context and profession. Consequently, when asked about practice in their experience of that profession, particularly when their ‘language of education’ (English in this case) is used, their responses would naturally include some professional ‘jargon’. For instance: ‘There is a team approach to therapy. Usually the social worker does structured learning therapy. The module is based on needs and issues confronting the child’.<sup>72</sup> However, this is a natural way for educated people to respond. It does not invalidate reliability or compromise the integrity of their explanations. Kvale, who discusses in depth the subject of research interviews, takes a positive view of this and contends that even asking leading questions can be beneficial.<sup>73</sup>

Some prison staff members tried to make a good impression.<sup>74</sup> Others were concerned about their own plight and seemed pleased to have an interested party to whom they

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 20/2/2008.

<sup>73</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 88-9.

<sup>74</sup> See, for instance, 3.1.1.

could air their views, or even vent their frustrations: ‘Marylou was friendly, helpful and gave an honest account, warts and all. She would like to see great improvements in the provision for the CICL boys;’ the ‘houseparents’ also spoke frankly, disagreeing with the ‘party line’.<sup>75</sup> At CCOSCC, boys had little opportunity to speak and be interpreted, but speaking to them was still a worthwhile exercise because the experience added to my body of knowledge about the life of youngsters in jail. A disadvantage in three of the jails was the ban on taking photographs, which are so valuable for recall, particularly when there are time constraints.

Experience has taught me that it is embedded in eastern cultures not to complain about bosses or a work situation. In the Philippines they appeared to have a greater tendency to speak openly with plain and simple discourse and my respondents voiced their opinions and criticisms with candour, perhaps because I was an ‘outsider’. At Tahanan, a staff member was startlingly honest about the difficulties and allowed us to interview the boys without hindrance.<sup>76</sup> At Butuan jail, the warder left us all with the priest; later, she explained the problems and her own dissatisfaction with the state of affairs. The boys were anxious about their predicament, but did not appear to feel inhibited by the visit of the Apostolate and two foreigners; they seemed to tell their stories freely and honestly.

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<sup>75</sup> Field notes, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>76</sup> To retain confidentiality, some of such evidence is not directly quoted in the thesis but it has been used indirectly in the analysis.

## Conclusion

Personal differences (age, socio-economic status, education and gender) were greater with the boys than with the staff members. However, many scholars have shown that effects of such differences on the data are often marginal or non-existent.<sup>77</sup> They may even be useful and, as Margery Wolf adds, ‘we cannot erase the differences between us. In truth, we would not be there if there were not differences; our findings would be neither interesting nor important’.<sup>78</sup> In my research, I was conscious that status differences might affect the research process, but I did not expect insuperable problems because I have experience of cross-cultural research and know that barriers can be crossed. Rubin and Rubin discuss interviewing across what they term ‘social cleavages’.<sup>79</sup> They observe:

Many interviewers are afraid to interview across class, race, sex or ethnic lines. In practice, bridging these gaps is often less difficult than anticipated, and there are advantages to sharing the life and experiences of someone with a background quite different from your own.<sup>80</sup>

Lee explains that data is collected more effectively by researchers who do not expect problems.<sup>81</sup> On reflection, I believe that the most marked differences with adults were

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<sup>77</sup> As summarised in Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 99-101.

<sup>78</sup> Margery Wolf, ‘Musings from an Old Gray Wolf’, in Diane L. Wolf, ed., *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 217.

<sup>79</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 1st edn., 111-114.

<sup>80</sup> Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 1st edn., 111.

<sup>81</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 101.

counteracted generally by shared aspects of identity – religion, professional care training and experience and an interest in the government/NGO rehabilitative establishments. Remaining differences were helpful in encouraging participants to explain more fully than they would do to someone just like them. Kvale contends that: ‘Rather than attempt to eliminate the influence of the personal interaction of interviewer and interviewee, we might regard the person of the interviewer as the primary research instrument for obtaining knowledge, which puts strong demands on the quality of his or her knowledge, their empathy and their craftsmanship.’<sup>82</sup> My personal strengths and my previous work in similar fields contributed to my own knowledge, empathy and craftsmanship.

Potential barriers to open discourse can often be overcome by respect, courtesy, shared humour, and gratitude for participants’ hospitality and participation. As Liamputtong explains: ‘most methodological frameworks I have proposed are based on love, compassion, reciprocity, respect for culture and people’s dignity and a call for collaborative efforts with local people. They are methodologies that will allow us to see the world through the eyes of the research participants.’<sup>83</sup>

Despite the challenges, these settings were successful for my research purposes. The wealth of information gleaned, and the richness of the data for analysis, supports this.

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<sup>82</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 86.

<sup>83</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 2.



***b) Linguistic constraints***

In social science fieldwork, researchers need to depict the symbolic universes in order to understand the thoughts and actions of the people who live in them. In order to do this, it is necessary to learn the language and ‘attendant lifeways’ of the community.<sup>84</sup> Although I mastered only some basic Tagalog, rather than fluency in each Filipino dialect encountered, anticipated linguistic constraints on Luzon were reduced, since all adults, and many senior boys in the rehabilitation centres, were able to speak English and to interpret for other boys.

In all institutions, staff members spoke to us in English, but sometimes conversation between them was conducted in a local language. Staff meetings in PREDA began in English, but when matters began to sound more interesting or controversial, some people would lapse into Tagalog or a mixture of languages; until someone interpreted or explained, I could be left behind.<sup>85</sup> At Grace Home, the youths interviewed individually spoke in English, but as topics became deeper, or more personal or complex, they would continue in Tagalog and the facilitator would interpret for them.

Liamputtong states that ‘interpreters/translators must fully understand the research questions and the process of research prior to any data collection taking place.’<sup>86</sup> During my fieldwork, when interpreters were used, these were normally independent from the

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<sup>84</sup> McCall, ‘The Fieldwork Tradition’, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Field notes 13/2/2008.

<sup>86</sup> Liamputtong, *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*, 149-147.

institutions. Beyond Luzon, I was on every occasion accompanied by a guide, whom I had specifically enlisted to assist me. For example, during all the fieldwork on Cebu Island, I was accompanied by a local, educated woman or her daughter. We stayed in their house and discussed the research on a daily basis. On just one occasion, when the warder lapsed into conversation with the boys, and ‘forgot’ to tell us what was being said, our companion, though fluent in Cebuano,<sup>87</sup> did not understand much, as they spoke a different Visayan dialect. On Mindanao, I had excellent interpreter assistance from two priests and the sister of one of them.

Although greater fluency in Tagalog or another local language might have enabled eavesdropping, more casual conversation or closer relationships with some of the boys, it is not difficult to build a relationship with children by means of body language, gifts of food, physical activities and general demeanour. My twenty years’ teaching experience and my experience of fieldwork in developing countries has enabled me to operate in such situations. Facial expressions and other body language and paralinguistic signals were easy to interpret. One can observe emotional reactions and gauge whether respondents are relaxed, afraid, distressed, and their level of engagement with the subject being discussed. Linguistic differences were, in a sense, a leveller and often became a useful means of communication in casual conversation, as boys were keen to practise and increase their knowledge of English with us and to teach us further Tagalog vocabulary.

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<sup>87</sup> The primary language of Cebu Island.

Language difference can be turned to advantage by an adaptable researcher. It can enable one to be less intrusive and more observant of other cues. In interviews that involved an adult facilitator to interpret my questions and the boys' answers, I watched closely how the question was being put across and tried to judge whether the facilitator was 'putting words into their mouths' in an attempt to obtain suitable responses. Using an interpreter allowed an interview to progress more slowly, giving me time to watch for cues and to think how to proceed. It also provided an opportunity to watch the natural interaction between a staff member and a boy or group of boys, yielding valuable insights into the relationships existing between them.

In a less literal sense, I was able to 'speak the language' and understand the lifestyle in the rehabilitation centres, due to my experience in related fields, such as teaching and observing charitable work in developing countries and religion-based lifestyles, as noted particularly in the Protestant NGO.<sup>88</sup>

### ***c) Recording data***

On some occasions, it was possible to take notes by hand during participant observation: using a small notepad from my bag, I could privately record events or conversations without attracting attention. Much of the time, it was necessary to rely on memory and to write notes in private, as soon as possible afterwards. As there seemed nothing strange to the boys or staff about foreign visitors taking snapshots, a digital camera was often

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<sup>88</sup> See 4.2.1.

helpful in recording details. Having a research partner present assisted accurate recall.

It was sometimes practical to take notes during non-participant observation, such as when seated in an audience while Gingoog RRCY boys performed songs and dances, followed by ‘testimonies’ regarding their rehabilitation at the centre. At other times, stored memories were recorded shortly afterwards, and a camera was used extensively, when not forbidden or restricted. Internal documentation, such as official reports, programmes and schedules, rotas and fundraising proposals, was usually produced by staff members spontaneously or on request and some organisations had created websites, providing further useful information.

Initially, I used a voice recorder during individual interviews. However, as experience has proved, the use of technology is often problematic when doing fieldwork, particularly in developing countries. Background noise caused by electric fans or air-conditioning indoors, or by the traffic when working out of doors, made recordings impossible to decipher.<sup>89</sup> Reluctantly, I abandoned the voice recorder and relied on notes taken by computer or by hand, depending on the circumstances. Fortunately, during this research I did not experience electrical power cuts, as so often experienced in developing countries. The opportunistic approach to interviewing sometimes meant using a small notepad when the occasion arose to gain some useful information or opinions.

Group interviews were organised as fairly informal chats either with a small group of

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<sup>89</sup> I had also taken extensive notes on a laptop computer during those first recorded interviews.

boys, or with all the boys in an institution, together with a staff member to facilitate and interpret. In order to keep this informality and with the intention of encouraging boys to be candid about their experiences and to express their opinions freely, I decided to use a notebook rather than a laptop in these interviews. With two researchers and a member of staff present, I could take notes without interrupting the flow of conversation, benefiting from the extra time available for data-writing when using an interpreter or assistant.

The use of a voice recorder would have aided the procurement of a verbatim record, by means of a transcript, and a resource for listening later to details of expression in participant's voices and mode of speech. It might also have enabled me to take more notes about body language, the attention of interviewees and the nature of interruptions. Both individual and group interviews were always recorded in situ, with full quotes written verbatim, thus avoiding the pitfalls of making abbreviated notes that lose the exact words of a participant or that may contain gaps or inaccuracies. Generally, interviews proceeded slowly, due to cultural and language reasons and factors such as the hot weather and the nature of the subject. When adults were speaking in their 'language of education' rather than their local 'familiar' language, or when an interpreter was being used, interviews proceeded at a measured pace. Since interviewees participated without prior preparation, they took time to think about their answers. This immediacy validates the reliability of their responses, too. Extra time was available for recording data, because of the presence of a research assistant.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> See 2.3.3.

Due to the ethnographic-type participant observation of this fieldwork, some incidental conversations and field note descriptions could not be noted in situ, but were recorded at the first opportunity. Often conversations were noted in detail after a lapse of just a few minutes, but sometimes descriptions were written a few hours after the event. In situations where data are remembered, rather than recorded immediately, there can be concerns about reliability. The precise words of a conversation might be lost; details of an occurrence could be partly forgotten or misinterpreted. However, as Wayne says, ‘With practice, most people can become quite adept at recording detailed descriptions, including direct quotations, only minutes after something occurs.’<sup>91</sup> As regards descriptions written up later in the day, it is worth bearing in mind that qualitative research is about in-depth understanding: the data produced are different from those expected from carefully designed quantitative research. Though not quoted verbatim, such items enhance in-depth understanding of people, situations and events and thus form a relatively small but vital part of the data. As Kvale observes: ‘If you want to study people’s behaviour and their interaction with their environment, the observations and informal conversations of field studies will usually give more valid knowledge than merely asking subjects about their behaviour.’<sup>92</sup>

Reflecting upon the reliability of relying on memory on some occasions, I also believe that the unfamiliar subject matter and unpredictability of events, whilst evoking subjective reactions, aided vivid and accurate recall. The unexpectedly emotional impact

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<sup>91</sup> Fife, *Doing Fieldwork*, 86.

<sup>92</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 45.

of an encounter also enhances memory of a specific conversation or incident. Any slight deficiency in personal memory or suspicion of subjective misinterpretation could be checked by consultation with the research assistant, interpreter or staff member. Events that defied explanation or raised further questions could be explored in further conversations or interviews, as Kvale explains: 'If the research topic concerns more implicit meanings and tacit understandings, like the taken-for-granted assumptions of a group or culture, then participant observation and field studies of actual behaviour supplemented by informal interviews may give more valid information.'<sup>93</sup> In this study, the combined use of observation and interviews in ten different locations served to strengthen the reliability of the data collected.

### **Sub-section conclusion**

Fieldwork in developing countries brings many challenges and opportunities. A mixed-methods approach that includes unstructured interviewing yields results in terms of local information and understanding. It also 'allows us, as the field research progresses, to gain a sense of what local people think about our ongoing analysis'.<sup>94</sup> In this research, challenges were overcome by respecting individuals, of whatever age or position, and by obtaining the assistance of supportive adults. Attention was focussed on careful listening, in interviews and unprogrammed conversations, and on immediacy of recording data.

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<sup>93</sup> Kvale, *Doing Interviews* 45.

<sup>94</sup> Fife, *Doing Fieldwork*, 106.

## **Section summary**

This section described in detail the fieldwork methodology. It described the qualitative methodology employed (2.4.1.), the use of participant observation (2.4.2.) and non-participant observation (2.4.3.), the use of interviews in qualitative research (2.4.4.), individual interviews (2.4.5.) and group interviews (2.4.6.). It discussed the methodological challenges of interpersonal dynamics, linguistic constraints and methods of recording data (2.4.7.).

## **2.5. Ethical research conduct**

There are always ethical questions to be considered in the conduct of research and these are particularly acute when the collection of data involves the participation of people other than the researchers. ‘Participation’ includes both active participation, such as when participants take part in an interview, and cases where participants take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (for example, in crowd behaviour research). In planning the design of this research and at every stage of data collection and analysis, thought was given to the ethical considerations of interviewing and observing people, many of whom were under 18 years at the time of their participation.

### **2.5.1. Risk assessment**

#### *Analysis of risk factors*

An analysis of potential risk revealed the following factors:

- Data would be collected from some vulnerable groups: in this case children and young people aged below 18 years and who had probably been victims of neglect, abuse or difficult circumstances.



- Interviews could touch on personal memories and might possibly induce more anxiety, stress or emotional pain than is expected from everyday life.
- There could be some risk to the personal health and safety of the researcher and research assistant.
- There might be an element of deception in research that is conducted without full and informed consent of some participants at the time.

### *Justification of risk*

The subject of this study is an under-researched area, but one of major concern to NGOs and humanitarian agencies worldwide. Little is known and less has been written about the global problems of children in jails and attempts to rehabilitate them. The study creates awareness of the problems and demonstrates what can be done to help young people lead more fulfilling lives. The thesis focuses on the spiritual transformation processes that form a significant part of the rehabilitation of young prisoners. This is innovative and original research that contributes to the academic study in this field.

### *Minimising risks*

Believing in the value of this research project, I was prepared to be subjected to some potential risks, admittedly in the hope and expectation that these were perceived rather than real and would be embarrassing and inconvenient rather than life-threatening. We took sensible precautions to ensure our own safety, as is evident from the procedures we followed. In the event, the biggest risk for us was to our personal physical and emotional

health.<sup>95</sup> There was no apparent risk to others, involved or not involved in the research, other than that discussed below, and everything within my power was done to minimise any risk to others or myself.

### **2.5.2. Sensitive research**

Bani Dev Makkar argues that, in ‘hands-on’ research overseas, ‘our ethical and moral codes are too often challenged by the unexpected. We are placed in situations so specific, and sometimes so unforeseen that it is often our judgement that becomes the most ready tool at such moments.’<sup>96</sup> Research on sensitive topics brings its own problems and issues, which can be methodological, ethical, political or legal, and which can affect the researcher’s personal life or personal security.<sup>97</sup> Lee states that ‘sensitive topics tax the methodological ingenuity of social scientists.’ Where research is sensitive, dangerous or otherwise threatening, mistrust, concealment and dissimulation can arise in relationships and can affect the availability and quality of data.<sup>98</sup> In sensitive subject areas, interviews are often stressful for both parties.<sup>99</sup>

This research topic is sensitive in that it could expose illegality and have political implications and could invoke a sense of guilt, shame or fear in the respondents and

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<sup>95</sup> See 2.6.3.

<sup>96</sup> Bani Dev Makkar, ‘Roles and responsibilities in researching poor women in Brazil’, in Trevor Welland and Lesley Pugsley, eds. *Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 75.

<sup>97</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 2.

<sup>99</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 102.

feelings of sadness, anger and impotency in both participants and researchers. My fieldwork was sensitive in the sense of being potentially politically embarrassing. Government officials might not wish to admit that they break the tenets of the 1989 United Nations CRC, including precepts that ‘No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily.’<sup>100</sup> They might not wish to be exposed for contravening the 2006 Philippines Republic Act 9344, which:

recognizes the right of every child alleged as, accused of, adjudged, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, taking into account the child's age and desirability of promoting his/her reintegration.<sup>101</sup>

Some prison officials admitted they were unable to keep the law; others insisted that they were keeping it or that they disagreed with it and it was impossible to carry it out. It was thus potentially dangerous for us on tourist visas to be seeking admission to jails and asking the inmates questions about their lives there.

Lee discusses the responsibilities researchers of sensitive topics have, at every stage of the process, to protect respondents regarding confidences disclosed and emotions aroused and expressed and the problems of gaining trust and, subsequently, eliciting information on subjects that emerge gradually during qualitative interviews.<sup>102</sup> In this research, interviews with staff members were not generally ‘sensitive research’ in the

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<sup>100</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 37.

<sup>101</sup> The Lawphil Project (2005), Title I. Ch. 1. Sec. 2d.

<sup>102</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 102-103.

sense that they required disclosure of a personal or intimate nature. However, particularly in institutions where we knew that children were locked up in contravention of the law and denied sufficient freedom, exercise or stimulation, our probing enquiry had the potential to arouse emotion on both sides.

We strove to keep both integrity and a responsibility of care for all respondents, whatever we felt about their actions or their views, not only out of respect and courtesy, for protection of our safety and for pragmatic ease of obtaining information, but also due to these ethical considerations. In any case, personnel are often employed in operations that are beyond their control and, by continuing to listen sympathetically, we learnt more of their personal dilemmas. For instance, one jail warder expressed his bitterness and frustration regarding his demeaning job to which he had been posted against his will and which he found degrading. He had worked for three years with no relevant training and could not cope with his difficult task without resorting to corporal punishment or keeping boys locked in their cells.

Lee suggests that researchers of sensitive topics ‘may need to be more acutely aware of their ethical responsibilities to research participants than would be the case with the study of a more innocuous topic.’<sup>103</sup> There are ethical and personal questions to be considered when planning to interview children and other vulnerable people. In all my relationships whilst in the field there was an intrinsic requirement to be sensitive and to cater for the needs of others. This placed inevitable constraints, particularly when

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<sup>103</sup> Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 2.

questioning children who were still forcibly incarcerated or who had suffered trauma.

In interviews where boys were talking about their personal lives, vulnerability and emotional reaction were possible and I chose to have a member of staff present: if a boy spoke of experiences not previously disclosed, the staff member might need to report this to a senior colleague or therapist or follow it up further with the child. We did not question young offenders about their crimes. However, if asked what their lives were like prior to entering a rehabilitation centre, boys frequently recounted both the distresses of their childhood years and the circumstances leading to arrest, although many had not, in fact, been convicted of any offence.

### **2.5.3. Research participants**

As described in 2.4., the methodology of data collection in the Philippines included participant observation, non-participant observation and individual and group interviews. In all, the interviewed participants comprised twenty-three members of staff, both male and female, nine groups of boys who had been imprisoned and eight individual boys. The boys were either in jail or in a residential rehabilitation centre for boys released from jail. They had a normal range of physical fitness and intellectual ability and were supervised by members of staff.

Emma Renold argues that:

Within the 'new' sociology of children and childhood, children are perceived as active, constructive and value producing and worthy of study in their own right. From the 'object' to the 'subject' of research, children are no longer researched 'on' but 'with' and their accounts of social reality and personal experience are taken as

competent portrayals of their experiences.<sup>104</sup>

This study takes account of the experience and viewpoints of both child and adult participants.

### *Power imbalance*

Whether or not the topic is a sensitive one, attention must be paid to the real or perceived difference in power between researcher and participants.<sup>105</sup> The power dynamic works both ways.<sup>106</sup> Some participants, such as managers, for instance ‘tend to exert more power and possess higher status than the researchers themselves.’<sup>107</sup> Where research subjects are of lower real or perceived status, interviews can be therapeutic and empowering, but inequality of power can alienate.<sup>108</sup> Much depends on the methods employed to establish rapport with the interviewee.<sup>109</sup>

Due to the potential power dynamic between the young Filipino participants and white, adult, comparatively wealthy higher-status researchers, group interviewing was chosen

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<sup>104</sup> Emma Renold, ‘Privacies and Private: making ethical dilemmas public when researching sexuality in the primary school’, in Trevor Welland and Lesley Pugsley, eds, *Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research - Cardiff Papers in Qualitative Research* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 126.

<sup>105</sup> Emma Bell and Alan Bryman, ‘The Ethics of Management Research: An Exploratory Content Analysis’ *British Journal of Management* 18, no. 1 (2007): 68.

<sup>106</sup> Carol Truman, Donna M. Mertens and Beth Humphries, *Research and Inequality* (London: UCL, 2000), 75-76.

<sup>107</sup> David E. Grey, *Doing Research in the Real World* (London: Sage, 2009).

<sup>108</sup> Nicola Slee, *Women’s Faith Development: Patterns and Processes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 49-51.

<sup>109</sup> For a discussion of power in the interview situation, see Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*, 107-111.

for most interview occasions with boys, in order to ease anxieties and reduce the power differential. As Simon Best suggests, the ‘halo effect’, by which participants aim to please the interviewer rather than give honest responses,<sup>110</sup> can also be ‘amplified with adolescent participants wanting to give the “right answer”, and the adult researcher being in a position of power, in relation to adolescent participants.’<sup>111</sup> This dynamic may have operated on occasion, but in general, the conversation was relaxed and the participants spoke without restraint.<sup>112</sup>

We did not listen to the private conversations of boys but, outside of interviews, we frequently engaged them in conversation and they were encouraged to relate their experiences and feelings. We took care never to intimidate adults or minors, but by means of body language and friendly conversation to put them at ease, always addressing them in a spirit of enquiry from an interested person to an informed one.

### *Recruiting participants*

Where possible, my research visit to each institution was arranged in advance with members of staff in authority, by means of email and telephone.<sup>113</sup> Subordinate members of staff and boys were recruited by invitation (through a member of staff) to talk about

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<sup>110</sup> See Howard S. Becker, ‘Problems of inference and proof in participant observation’, *American Sociological Review* 23, no. 6, 1958: 655.

<sup>111</sup> Simon Best, ‘The Community of Intimacy: The Spiritual Beliefs and Religious Practices of Adolescent Quakers’ (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Birmingham, 2010), 38.

<sup>112</sup> See discussion in 2.4.7. a).

<sup>113</sup> Except on occasions when visits were arranged solely by sponsors.

their experiences. They were always given an explanation of the purpose of the research and invited to ask any questions. It was made clear to them that participation was voluntary and they could decline to answer any question if they wished. At the start of every individual and group interview, the purpose and scope of the research and the destination of data was explained verbally.

No participant ever expressed a desire to withdraw from the study, but if one had done, any data would have been destroyed. Since there was no question of any compensation, financial or otherwise, there were no problems attached to this aspect. There was an explicitly stated intention that information would be used to help others to work in rehabilitation of boys from prisons and for this reason members of staff and boys were always keen to do all they could to co-operate with the research.

### *Obtaining informed consent*

The issue of ‘informed consent’ in research has been debated at length during recent decades<sup>114</sup> and care was taken throughout this research to ensure that participants understood and acquiesced to the process and consequences of the study. Where possible, a relationship was built up with gatekeepers or interviewees over a period of time; where formal information was required in advance, a customised letter was sent. Following an explanation of our identity and the purposes and scope of the research, a typical letter contained this explanation:

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<sup>114</sup> See, for example: Roger Homan, *The Ethics of Social Research* (London: Longman, 1991), 69-91; Tina Miller and Mary Boulton, ‘Changing constructions of informed consent: Qualitative research and complex social worlds’, *Social Science & Medicine* 65, no. 11 (2007): 2199-2211.



Our method is to visit the project or facility, observe the programme and environment, interview key members of staff and, if possible, talk with some of the children who are involved in the programme. In this way we seek to learn how the programme operates, how it was set up, the problems and pitfalls that can be encountered (and how to address those problems) and the advice that those who operate the programme would offer to someone wishing to establish a similar facility in another place. We shall, in any published work, acknowledge the valued contribution of NGOs and government facilities but will not, of course, identify any individual child.

Although interviews with members of staff and boys followed a loose structure, if requested, a brief outline, as shown in Table 2.3., was sent in advance.

Proposed Interviews
<p>We'd like to interview key members of staff and talk with some of the boys about these questions and observe the activities that are relevant to these matters. The specific areas in which we are interested are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The release, rehabilitation and re-integration of CICL Minors who have been in jail. How are these things achieved in your work?</li> <li>2. What components of your programme do you believe help these children to turn their lives around, i.e. to become responsible and fulfilled citizens when they leave?</li> <li>3. Is there a spiritual aspect to your work and if so how does this help? Do you see a spiritual transformation in the boys during the course of their rehabilitation? If so, what do you understand by this term and how would you recognize it? Do you think that spiritual change is vital to the lasting effect of a diversion programme for CICL?</li> </ol>

*Table 2.3. Interview questions submitted on request*

These methods of obtaining consent applied to the rehabilitation centres at which data were collected. In addition, I visited four jails, two of which followed similar lines of

consent and access,<sup>115</sup> but I had no prior contact with the other two jails, for which access was negotiated by sponsors. However, the same ethical conduct applied to all interviews and to the treatment of all data.

### *Confidentiality*

All minors were treated as anonymous and their data dealt with ethically: names of boys in this thesis are fictitious. Limited personal information is used in the research, as collective experience is more important. This is largely true of staff members, too, but adult subjects who are already public spokespeople are identified and their views made known, as they did not expect anonymity.

### *Participant feedback*

Many staff members interviewed showed interest in the research and efforts were made to build ongoing relationships with them. My hope was that continued links and discussions with them about the research would provide them with appropriate feedback and opportunities to develop future action, making use of the research findings. In practice, few of these contacts have survived the period since the fieldwork but, where possible, participants were informed when the completed thesis was available.

### **Section summary**

This section dealt with issues of ethical research conduct. It assessed and justified any

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<sup>115</sup> See 3.1.

potential risk and explained how it was minimised in this fieldwork (2.5.1). It discussed the sensitive nature of this research with captive minors in a foreign culture (2.5.2.) and the careful treatment of research subjects (2.5.3.).

## **2.6. Subjective reflections**

There are many styles and uses of reflexivity in qualitative research. This section examines the presence of subjective bias and potential for influence in the research process.<sup>116</sup>

### **2.6.1. Researcher bias**

Subjectivity can generate problems in empirical research. Nelson and Aleshire argue that when we are ‘dealing with people’s beliefs, motives, hopes, fears, or ability to endure a lifestyle in spite of opposition, then we are into an area that is vague even to the person who responds to the questions.’<sup>117</sup> Thus, ‘even if an objective measuring device can be used to elicit information, the objective data must still be interpreted – a process which always requires logic and frequently reveals conviction.’<sup>118</sup>

Unstructured interviews provide a rich source of data: they ‘can tap complex areas of life

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<sup>116</sup> For a discussion of the uses and effects of reflexivity, see, Wanda Pillow, ‘Confession, catharsis or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research’, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 16, no. 2 (2003): 175-196.

<sup>117</sup> Nelson and Aleshire, ‘Research in Faith Development’, 181.

<sup>118</sup> Nelson and Aleshire, ‘Research in Faith Development’, 181.

where thought and feeling, memory and hope intersect',<sup>119</sup> but Nelson and Aleshire consider their use is 'riddled with problems that are not easily eliminated.' Interviewee subjectivity and bias is compounded with researcher bias and subjectivity. Each influences the other, as do the questions asked in the interview.<sup>120</sup> They contend, however, that such research can produce 'more reliable information than a person can obtain by guess, hunch, or even by experience accumulated over a period of time. With more reliable information, one can develop hypotheses about human life, which will help understand human situations.'<sup>121</sup>

Some preconceived ideas and biases were admittedly inherent in my choice of research proposal, locations and respondents and in the manner in which I steered discussion and conversation. Subjectivity seems inevitable in such fieldwork, which I began with a concern for imprisoned children, together with a knowledge that the practice of jailing children is against the CRC and Philippines law. I had an expectation, based on previous reading, that children in jails were kept in 'sub-human conditions'<sup>122</sup> and that the two NGO programmes of which I already knew would be 'examples of good practice' in their work of rescue and rehabilitation. In the course of the fieldwork, as these expectations were confirmed by experience, both my concern and understanding of the

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<sup>119</sup> Nelson and Aleshire, 'Research in Faith Development', 183.

<sup>120</sup> Nelson and Aleshire, 'Research in Faith Development', 183.

<sup>121</sup> Nelson and Aleshire, 'Research in Faith Development', 184.

<sup>122</sup> Shay Cullen, *Ending the Culture of Violence*  
<http://www.preda.org/main/archives/2010/r10082501.html> accessed 27/8/2010. Cullen's columns are published in The Manila Times.

need for action increased. However, I tried to ‘keep an open mind’ during the fieldwork, and was surprised by some of the outcomes.

Aware of the potential problems of relying upon data from interviewees with a possible interest in presenting a meritorious picture of a programme, I maintained balance by visiting several institutions that were independent of one another and in very different locations. This enabled me to construct a more accurate and complete picture of practice that combined elements of data from several institutions. Where possible, I also interviewed a number of staff individually at an institution and compared their responses. To check further against bias, interview data were tested against observation data and, on occasion, by asking about one institution at another. In practice, I found that most interviewees openly admitted to failures, problems, shortcomings, mistakes or disagreements and were candid in their views of the establishment. For ethical reasons, not all such views could be quoted, but they are used in analysis and to build theory.

Thus, it is important is to be aware of possible researcher bias and influence and of interviewee partiality. The researcher must act with discretion and acceptance so as to build a relationship of trust, but must also listen with an objectivity that retains the power of critical analysis, probing more deeply when required and testing items of data against one another.

### **2.6.2. Researcher influence**

It is inevitable that the participation of researchers has some effect on a researched scene, just as an actor could not be on stage without making a difference to the

performance. Even the manner in which members of ‘the crowd’ look, sound and move in that metaphor affects the action, as does the behaviour of the audience. The mere presence of visitors can change the atmosphere in a room, especially if they are ‘different’, as we were, in terms of age, race, appearance, social class and material wealth. The inevitability of observers having an effect on the subjects observed or interviewed is well documented. Albas and Albas say they ‘made use of unobtrusive measures’ to compensate for this, now widely known as the ‘Hawthorne effect’.<sup>123</sup> As researchers, we tried to ‘merge’ with the scenery, but would not pretend to have achieved more than partial success.

Makkar discusses the social relationship that develops between the researcher and the research subjects of a different country and culture, especially when it involves a foreign researcher coming from a position of comparative economic superiority.<sup>124</sup> In her field research of impoverished women in Brazil, Makkar was often asked for financial or other kinds of help and, whilst she admits to being in a dilemma, she decided to offer information about a grant that she knew would make a difference. Similar ethical difficulties dogged me throughout my fieldwork in the Philippines. How could I see children in appalling conditions, listen to their stories and ‘walk away’? Often I had to, but with great emotional cost to myself and maybe another let-down for the youngsters.

A less emotionally charged example illustrates how easily I could find myself

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<sup>123</sup> Albas and Albas, ‘Experience, Observation and Theory’, 127.

<sup>124</sup> Makkar, ‘Roles and responsibilities in researching poor women in Brazil’, 83.

manipulating events. Arriving at a public park with a large group of boys and adults, we learnt that, due to price increases, they had insufficient cash to hire the customary shelters to provide shade for people and food. Approached by a staff member, we naturally agreed to pay the shortfall. Perhaps more authentic data could have been gained by allowing them to work out their own solution or to suffer the extreme heat of the sun all day (and suffer it ourselves – unless we cared for our own needs and ignored theirs, which was unthinkable). Inaction would have been heartless and lacking the generosity constantly shown towards us. Although perhaps a dilemma in research terms, in practice there was no choice. Besides, to be present and not offer assistance would also have affected the research scene and could have been detrimental to relationships and the ongoing success of collecting data. As Paul Oliver concludes, researchers need to take a flexible approach to ethical dilemmas, ‘placing the humanity and welfare of others at the centre of our considerations’.<sup>125</sup>

### **2.6.3. Personal reflections**

Some personal reflections conclude this chapter. Given the constraints and complexities of the preliminary networking to seek suitable locations and the difficulties of living and working in an alien environment, there was little that I had sufficient control to change. Ideally, I would have planned the research trip in more detail, obtained advance funding and had greater prior communication with the key institutions; in practice, I did attempt all three, but with limited success. I should have liked to spend more time at each of the

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<sup>125</sup> Oliver, *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics*, 150.

ten centres, but on the other hand I know that I saw a lot more than I expected when I began the journey. In addition, I visited more institutions than I would have done if I had worked to a definite plan for the five-week research period. Many factors were beyond my control. The political situation was unstable and the influence of American presence in the last century caused prices, for white foreigners at least, to be higher than expected and strained my budget.

My experience of the ‘ferment of intense engagement’<sup>126</sup> described by Bob Simpson is doubtless evident throughout this chapter. Plans and intentions are often subsumed in the attempt at reasonable survival in a developing country and the need to accede control to others brings its own problems for a researcher.<sup>127</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott describe fieldwork as ‘an unhealthy occupation’: all their contributors reported at least one incidence of illness during field research.<sup>128</sup> William Shaffir and Robert Stebbins take this further:

Fieldwork must certainly rank with the more disagreeable activities that humanity has fashioned for itself. It is usually inconvenient, to say the least, sometimes physically uncomfortable, frequently embarrassing, and, to a degree, always tense. For most researchers the day-to-day demands of fieldwork are fraught regularly with feelings of uncertainty and anxiety.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Bob Simpson, ‘You Don’t Do Fieldwork, Fieldwork Does You: Between Subjectivation and Objectivation in Anthropological Fieldwork’, in Dick Hobbs and Richard Wright, eds, *The Sage Handbook of Fieldwork* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 126.

<sup>127</sup> Simpson, ‘You Don’t Do Fieldwork, Fieldwork Does You’, 126.

<sup>128</sup> Devereux and Hoddinott, *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*, 14.

<sup>129</sup> Shaffir and Stebbins, *Experiencing Fieldwork: An Insider View of Qualitative Research*, 1.



John Lofland et al. acknowledge the mixed emotional experiences of fieldwork, including negative components such as fear and anxiety and positive times of exhilaration, fun and adventure.<sup>130</sup> Whilst my field research was, in general, an enjoyable and constructive experience, I also experienced difficulties on a daily basis, including communication failure, anxiety and physical discomforts relating to transport, food, climate, sanitary facilities, inadequate sleep, intense fatigue and illness. These problems placed their own limitations on data collection.

An incidental description in my field research diary illustrates the emotional impact of witnessing events, even when not actively involved:

The police station has two detention cells at the end of the main corridor. The men's cell was more than full, having 52 men in there. They didn't have room to all sit at once, not that there was anything to sit on other than the floor. Since they can be detained there for several days or even weeks, it is obvious that sleeping must be well nigh impossible. At times there can be 100 men locked in the cell. It must be impossible to move, let alone sit, sleep or use the toilet. It was a distressing sight.<sup>131</sup>

The personal cost of this unforgettable fieldwork is immeasurable. To encounter boys in appalling conditions in jails, to chat with them and allow them to open up about their personal lives and difficulties, then to leave without doing anything to relieve their plight, was exceedingly painful. To visit ten communities, some encouraging and some

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<sup>130</sup> John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 238.

<sup>131</sup> Field notes, 12/2/2008.

distressing, in the space of five weeks, never knowing what to expect and often having to hide my feelings to maintain relationships, resulted in emotional exhaustion and physical collapse. Researchers who are unwilling to sacrifice personal comfort should never undertake such fieldwork. However, there were also times of joy, excitement and personal satisfaction in the task. The benefits of obtaining data in this manner and, ultimately, raising awareness of the issues, far outweigh any personal, temporary distress.

### **Chapter summary**

This chapter described the methodology of this qualitative research. It explained how the fieldwork sites were chosen, how access was negotiated and how research methods were selected and used. It reflected upon the successes and constraints of the fieldwork and the ways in which the researcher was affected by various aspects of the research process.

Chapter Three describes the jails in this case study and traces the phenomenon of *alienation* in the lives of the imprisoned boys.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IMPRISONMENT AND ALIENATION

#### Introduction

This chapter describes the imprisonment of children and analyses their situation in terms of processes of spiritual alienation. Section 3.1. describes the work of the prison institutions visited for the purposes of this research. The content of this descriptive section is based on data obtained at the institutions, from observation, conversations with residents, interviews with staff members and internal documents, together with reports from former prisoners, gleaned from interviews with staff and residents of rehabilitation centres. Section 3.2. introduces the theory of faith development as proposed in this thesis: *alienation, awakening and spiritual transformation*. It addresses the experience of alienation that can develop during the early lives of victimised children and can be exacerbated by circumstances of being in conflict with the law and imprisonment.

#### 3.1. Prison institutions

This section describes each of the four prisons<sup>1</sup> visited during the data collection phase of the research: CRADLE in Metro-Manila, Luzon (3.1.1.), Operation Second Chance Center in Cebu (3.1.2.), Tahanan ng Kabataan in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao (3.1.3.) and

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<sup>1</sup> For definition, see 2.1.

the Provincial Jail in Butuan, Mindanao (3.1.4.). These descriptions are enriched by data gained from brief, intensive visits that left a lasting impression.

### **3.1.1. CRADLE**

#### ***a) The institution***

When RA9344 required the separation of child offenders from adult inmates,<sup>2</sup> all minors in Metro-Manila jails were transferred to a separate facility, named ‘the Center for Restorative Activities, Development and Learning Experience’ (CRADLE).<sup>3</sup> Despite its creative name, the centre is run by the BJMP and is actually a jail for minors, sited inside a police camp, in buildings originally intended for adult drug offenders.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Client admission*

Of the 108 reported detainees, 21 were aged 15, 80 were aged 16-17 and 7 were 18 years old. Sixty-nine had been committed due to crimes against property, 14 for crimes against persons, 5 for drug related charges, 5 for contravening ‘special laws such as car napping’ and 10 for crimes against chastity.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See 1.2.2.

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan M. Hicap, *Govt’s CRADLE for child offenders* reported in the Manila Times. [http://www.manilatimes.net/Thursday December 20, 2007](http://www.manilatimes.net/Thursday%20December%2020,%202007), accessed 10/2/2008.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 12/2/2008.

<sup>5</sup> Hicap, *Govt’s CRADLE for child offenders*.

### *Accommodation*

The children were incarcerated in austere buildings set inside high walls, the outside space consisting of concrete exercise yards.<sup>6</sup> Inside, the jail had long concrete corridors and staircases and about ten large, bare, barred cells with locked gates. The cells (renamed ‘dorms’ after RA9344)<sup>7</sup> contained basic plywood bunks, with thin mats on them. CRADLE has a reputation (founded on reports from visitors<sup>8</sup> and former inmates<sup>9</sup>) as an overcrowded, foul-smelling jail. On the day I visited, corridors and other areas had been washed and the youngsters looked clean. PREDA staff members, whilst pleased to see better conditions than previously, were convinced that this improvement had been arranged for our benefit.<sup>10</sup>

### *Case management*

Six social workers have responsibility for rehabilitation, which involves care management, counselling and coordination with the courts and with local governments.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Field notes, 12/2/2008.

<sup>7</sup> Hicap, *Govt’s CRADLE for child offenders*.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with a visitor from PREDA to CRADLE, 14/02/2008.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 14/02/2008.

<sup>10</sup> Field notes, 12/2/2008.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with staff member, CRADLE, 12/02/2008.

## ***b) The programme***

### *Structure of the day*

According to the schedules displayed on the office wall, after household duties the youngsters attend ALS classes<sup>12</sup> for most of the day and enjoy physical exercise and recreation outside. However, PREDA personnel who visit weekly reported that these activities are not carried out: 'When we visit CRADLE, the kids are in detention cells with no constructive programme' and 'consequently the boys become bored and resort to unproductive and self-harming conduct.'<sup>13</sup>

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Five NGOs have 'adopted a dorm' to conduct values formation and to arrange Christmas parties for the children.<sup>14</sup> One of these was observed with a group of boys, making Valentine cards using small wax crayons, but I have no evidence relating to the spiritual value of their activities.

### *Education and training*

CRADLE personnel stated, 'As well as the formal education shown in the schedules, the boys benefit from occasional sessions of skills training, like simple electrical engineering and candle making, offered by the NGOs.'<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with staff member, CRADLE, 12/02/2008.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with staff member, CRADLE, 12/02/2008.

### *Recreational activities*

At the time of my visit, some boys were sitting at tables in a ground floor room talking with family visitors. Those not with visitors or the NGO were locked in their ‘dorms’.

### *Discipline*

PREDA boys distributed drinks and biscuits they had brought through the bars of the children’s cells. Those with the NGO were brought outside by jail officers and instructed to crouch down in lines to receive their snacks.

### *Discrepancies*

There are marked differences between my observations that day and information gleaned, both from staff and boys at PREDA and from conversations with ex-prisoners from CRADLE whom I met elsewhere. According to my interview data, CRADLE is more like a detention centre than a youth home or rehabilitation centre, as intended by the new law.<sup>16</sup> The children are confined in barred cells and handcuffed when they are called to the court.<sup>17</sup>

Boys discharged from CRADLE relate, and show evidence of, severe physical punishment and abuse inflicted on them by other inmates and jail guards.<sup>18</sup> For instance, a 15-year-old boy narrated his experience following discharge from CRADLE: on the

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<sup>16</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 22/2/2008.

long journey from Manila, the social worker tried to reassure him by saying there would be a ‘welcoming party’ for him at PREDA. Later he divulged that he was terrified because this term had been used at CRADLE for the violent beating with a square-edged piece of timber given, as a matter of course, on his first day there – presumably to ensure his submission for the remainder of his stay – and from which he still bore the scars.<sup>19</sup>

### ***c) Reintegration***

Boys transferred from CRADLE to therapeutic rehabilitation centres are often found to need significant therapy and counselling in order to deal with the harshness of their experiences in prison before they are ready to benefit constructively from the programme and prepare for reintegration into society.<sup>20</sup>

## **3.1.2. The Cebu City Operation Second Chance Center**

### ***a) The institution***

The Cebu City Operation Second Chance Center (CCOSCC) was created in 2002 by a partnership of the Cebu City Task Force on Street Children and the Cebu City Government in order to improve conditions for minors in conflict with the law.<sup>21</sup> Prior to this, boys were incarcerated in the city jail, which held 270 men, women and children.<sup>22</sup> Conditions were very harsh, as the boys were all confined with adult criminals in one

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<sup>19</sup> Conversation with a visitor, 14/2/2008.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 22/2/2008.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>22</sup> Hicap, *Govt's CRADLE for child offenders*.



cell, sleeping on the concrete floor or in hammocks, with inadequate food. Children mingled with criminals and learned to copy them.<sup>23</sup> Juvenile offences began to extend from petty crime to include murder, homicide and rape.

In 1998, the NGO/ City Government partnership wanted to separate the children from the adults in jail but lacked funds. Following political advocacy with the Senator and Congress, they built ‘the first separate minors’ detention centre in the country with the intention of providing a genuine rehabilitation facility for young offenders’, using donated building materials and voluntary labour.<sup>24</sup> They were delighted to see the concern of the community as the task force came together to build the new centre for CICL, large enough to accommodate 200 young offenders from the Province of Cebu.<sup>25</sup> Named the Cebu City Operation Second Chance Center, it was seen as ‘a second chance opportunity for the community to take responsibility as well as for children in conflict with the law.’<sup>26</sup>

The BJMP has a mandate to operate jails all over the country, but, in this case, it is only a member of the board and does not have sole management of the centre. The Board has control and appoints the centre staff; the City Government also puts in personnel as houseparents and CCOSCC contributes three social workers. The NGO would like to see

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<sup>23</sup> Hicap, *Govt’s CRADLE for child offenders*.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>26</sup> Hicap, *Govt’s CRADLE for child offenders*.

great improvements in the provision for the CICL boys and tried to make the centre livelier by calling on other parties, such as the Family Court, DSWD, local Government and the Parole and Probation services to help in its management.<sup>27</sup> However, the BJMP has its own organisation and, in 2002, there was a quarrel about how to manage the centre as the partners had different orientations and approaches.<sup>28</sup> In practice, ‘the tripartite management creates complications because the roles of provincial government, BJMP and local government are confused and there needs to be more focus of direction.’<sup>29</sup>

### *Objectives*

At the time of my visit, the centre, although ostensibly in the transition stage to becoming a boys’ home, in most respects was still a jail.<sup>30</sup> A large notice in the reception area read:

Vision: A residential caring treatment facility shall provide children and youth in contact with the law a second chance to live with dignity and self-worth, recognizing their rights and potentials to become productive citizens as they are reunited with their family and reintegrated back to their community.

Mission: To provide children and youth in contact with the law the protection and guidance and promote their holistic development through convergence of programme and services that will transform them into self-reliant and responsible citizen of nation.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Executive Director, Cebu City Commission for the Welfare and Protection of Children (CCCWPC), 22/02/2008.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>30</sup> Field notes, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

Goals and objectives: It is the avowed goal of CCOSCC to promote the welfare of children and youth in contact with the law and to help them enhance their opportunities for a productive and meaningful life through mobilisation of all stakeholders in the convergent of social services.<sup>31</sup>

Features of a therapeutic community have been superimposed on the jail setting. For example, the prison guards no longer wear paramilitary style uniforms as they did and have been re-titled 'houseparents'. It is the only jail facility in the country with houseparents,<sup>32</sup> but 'there are only two houseparents on each shift for all the boys so they cannot watch them all the time. The houseparents are also guards.'<sup>33</sup> There were large, bright murals on many of the walls. However, on other walls and notice boards were the rules, philosophy and schedules of a strictly controlled establishment.<sup>34</sup>

#### *Client admission*

Eighty-nine male and four female residents aged 16 to 18 years were detained at the CCOSCC centre (the number apparently increasing daily).<sup>35</sup> Detention could last any length of time, depending on the case, the longest to date being 18 months. All the minors were brought in one large bus from the old jail to the new centre, handcuffed in

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<sup>31</sup> In this thesis, [*sic*] has not been used, where it might normally be, within verbal quotes or unpublished documents that have originated in the Philippines (whether or not they have been translated), due to language differences.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>34</sup> Field notes, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

case they escaped, and they did not share the community's enthusiasm for the move. They were anxious about facing the unknown and resented the transfer, not wanting to leave the adult criminals, who 'took care' of them in the communal cell.<sup>36</sup>

### *Accommodation*

Located in the mountains, 20 minutes by road above Cebu City, CCOSCC is a huge concrete structure that awed and scared the first children transferred there from city jails because 'it is cold inside and does not have a homely feeling.'<sup>37</sup> The windows were barred and the entrances onto the landing, the kitchen and the teaching areas were all enclosed by locked prison gates. Asked whether it was not breaking the law to detain these minors in jail, the Director admitted: 'I have told the staff to open the bars daily if possible so that we are not accused of breaking the law. In some instances of quarrelling they transfer boys to an isolation cell. This is also illegal.'<sup>38</sup> There was a large outdoor area, covered to shield against the sun, mainly comprising a basketball court. House-parents said that physical activities form a large part of the programme<sup>39</sup> but most detainees were locked in a 'dorm' on the first floor, as it was 'siesta time'. Two boys were isolated in a separate cell assigned for rule-breakers; the rest filled one large cell lined on both sides with wooden double bunks.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>40</sup> Field notes, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

### *Case management*

It is apparently not yet possible to implement the 2006 Act, mainly due to a lack of resources at every level, from bureaucracy and government departments through to physical changes needed in the centre itself.<sup>41</sup> In general the political will is present although there are also dissenting voices, calling for amendment of the 2006 Act. Some (houseparents included) hold that the age of criminal responsibility has been set too high and believe that a child knows what he is doing by the age of twelve. It is also thought that young boys who are capable of criminal acts, but under-age will be 'recruited' by crime syndicates who can then blame the minors and thus evade prosecution. I was also told: 'CICL boys are difficult to handle and it will not be at all easy to make the change from imprisonment to a social welfare model of treatment.'<sup>42</sup>

### ***b) The programme***

#### *Structure of the day*

It was apparent from both interviews and observation that CCOSCC inmates spent most of their days locked in cells. The daily routine included meals, cleaning and time for playing ball games. Lessons and training schedules were timetabled and volunteers from NGOs visited periodically to lead sessions.

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Displays indicated that set prayers are said at scheduled times of day. I was told:

Every Sunday Don Bosco volunteers hold Mass for the children.<sup>43</sup> Some boys, I don't know if they are sincere in their repentance because they seem receptive and serious during Mass but afterwards start to quarrel. I think it would be good to conduct individual spiritual counselling but we're not doing it.<sup>44</sup>

Added to this was the belief that 'It's also important for ex-CICL to share with children what they were before, so that boys see that they are not alone, that others committed crime and then became good citizens and therefore they can have hope.'<sup>45</sup>

### *Education and training*

Volunteers from the Don Bosco home conduct vocational training at the centre. During my visit, I observed about ten boys seated in a classroom doing technical drawing under the supervision of a Don Bosco teacher. There was a carpentry workshop with approximately six benches with tools, such as vices, a power saw and a finish planer. Hammers, chisels and other hand tools were locked away: they would make good escape tools or weapons, if they were not kept securely. Some well-made partly finished pieces

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<sup>43</sup> The Salesians of Don Bosco, founded by the Italian Catholic priest and educator Saint John Bosco (1815-1888), is an international Roman Catholic Religious Order 'dedicated to be signs and bearers of the love of God for young people, especially those who are disadvantaged.' More than 16,000 Priests and Brothers work in 128 countries worldwide, focusing their concern on 'the development of the young through education and evangelization' and employing teaching methods based on love rather than punishment. <http://www.salesians.org.uk/dbuk/index.html> accessed 26/4/2010.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

of woodwork were in evidence. By means of an agreement with TESDA,<sup>46</sup> the Don Bosco Training Center and the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation<sup>47</sup> provides vocational skills training in carpentry and woodworking to residents and awards certificates to those who complete training programmes to help them get jobs when they leave.

### *Recreational activities*

I was told, regretfully: ‘At present boys are held behind bars with very few activities.’<sup>48</sup> This was apparently due to the ethos of the personnel on duty at the centre. They disagreed both with the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act and with the views of the NGO regarding what constituted appropriate provision for young offenders.

### *Discipline*

As in CRADLE, boys were ordered by the staff member to crouch down. After they had chorused, ‘Good afternoon visitors’ we were introduced and allowed to talk with the boys. This submission to authority in the form of crouching on command was observed only in this prison and in CRADLE.

Initially, all staff members were trained by experts from outside the Philippines in

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<sup>46</sup> Technical Education and Skills Development Authority in the Philippines. For more information see <http://www.tesda.gov.ph/> accessed 20/3/2010

<sup>47</sup> The Ramon Aboitiz Foundation, Inc. (RAFI) is ‘a non-profit organization committed to re-shaping the future by enabling non-governmental, private voluntary, and people's organizations into sectors capable of democratizing development initiatives. RAFI's main program strategies are community organizing, networking, and advocacy’. It places emphasis on partnership and collaboration with other sectors so that ‘team work and synergy are enhanced’. <http://www.rafi.org.ph/> accessed 20/3/2010.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

methods of therapeutic intervention for the rehabilitation of CICL. ‘It was good for a few months but the warden gradually moved away from it and so the present staff is untrained and they need more input.’<sup>49</sup> The BJMP approach to discipline prevailed:

Instead of taking care of the minors, for instance, staff members were being instructed to employ corporal punishment and physical abuse and children were complaining of being beaten.<sup>50</sup> Staff members are asking for more training in management, therapies and stress de-briefing. Sometimes they shed their own anger by committing physical abuse on the children.<sup>51</sup> They have no support structure. That’s what I think they need. Sometimes other NGOs try to conduct training for them but it’s not regular. Our own members of Task Force conduct training for them funded by UNICEF, but there is a need to update the tools.<sup>52</sup>

### ***c) Reintegration***

Some offenders have come in and out of CCOSCC several times:

Our dream was to provide a genuine rehab facility but we failed there because they keep coming back. You cannot just release a child and say ‘Go’. You have to follow this kid. It’s good that Balay Pasilungan is there.<sup>53</sup> Some (but not all) can go there as a halfway house. We need more facilities like that. Boys cannot claim houseparents in this centre as their own because there are only two. In a village setting they would know them better.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>53</sup> The work of Balay Pasilungan is described in 4.2.2.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.



Some boys have been successfully rehabilitated: ‘One boy charged with homicide is now at Balay Pasilungan, is studying criminology and wants to be a policeman. Others are doing well and have their own families.’<sup>55</sup> When RA9344 became law, some of its provisions were already in place at CCOSCC and a technical working group was formed to look at the possibility of restructuring the facility to form a youth home, under the control of a local government office, with the NGO as a Board member. The Act gives them power to act in new ways as it ‘calls for barangays to give kids priority and provide for them, to invest in children for the future – not in buildings.’<sup>56</sup> When the transition is complete the bars will be removed and it will be a home with adequate facilities. Don Bosco will continue to help with skills training and plans to build a small bakery in the jail, along with a daytime training centre for diversional intervention for CICL boys not jailed.

### **3.1.3. Tahanan ng Kabataan**

#### ***a) The institution***

This centre for young offenders, called Tahanan ng Kabataan – meaning Children’s Home – is in practice a jail for minors in Cagayan de Oro on the island of Mindanao, in the south of the Philippines. Tahanan ng Kabataan is under the control of the city government.

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008. A barangay is the smallest administrative division in the Philippines; municipalities and cities are composed of barangays.

### *Client admission*

At the time of my visit, there were 28 residents. The boys ranged in age from 9-17 years, together with an 18-year-old and a 24-year-old. Fourteen of these inmates were children under 16 years, including two 13-year-olds, a 12-year-old, an 11-year-old and two 9-year-olds.

### *Accommodation*

Located in the grounds of the local hospital, the jail 'home' was surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence with rough barbed-wire gates, manned by guards. Along one side of a compound stood a low concrete building with a grass roof and small, barred, unglazed windows. Inside were just three small, dark, barred and bare rooms, one of which contained a couple of basic beds and another just a television. The walls were of cement – painted dark pink and covered in graffiti – and the concrete floor was filthy and littered.

The exterior space consisted of the dirty bare earth compound, in one corner of which stood a standpipe with a tap for water and a smoke-blackened pot on a small wood fire, and, in the centre, a basketball net on a pole. The sole toilet was in a block construction with a corrugated iron roof, away from the building, by the fence. At the edge of the compound sat two elderly people from the city streets 'housed' in a shack. On the other side, on the bare floor of a tiny cell, a teenage girl lay staring blankly out through the wall of bars. I learned that she was 17, 'crazy' and pregnant and had been placed here by

social workers who apparently had nowhere else to put her.<sup>57</sup>

### *Case management*

It seemed that no attention was being paid to individual boys except when they escaped or misbehaved. The 24-year-old had been there 11 years, awaiting trial for an alleged offence when he was 13. Others had left and returned so many times that they had lost count: a 17-year-old said he had been doing that since he was ten years old. A boy of 13 had been there for two years, as had most of the others, although some had escaped or been released during that time and been brought back. The nine-year-olds had been there three days: they had been found on the streets (not ‘in conflict with the law’) and reportedly been placed there for ‘safe keeping’ until they could be transferred. Doubt was cast on this occurring by the presence of seven further children under 15 and others who had been detained there since they were under 15.

All the others were detained while awaiting trial. When a court hearing finally takes place, the result is generally dismissal, or a suspended sentence and committal to a diversion programme, allowing rehabilitation in a Regional Centre or NGO programme and reintegration into the community.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>58</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

## ***b) The programme***

### *Structure of the day*

The boys rise at 5 a.m. to do 'kitchen chores' and before breakfast they pray, exercise (dancing) and wash (sometimes). After breakfast, they do some cleaning and then sleep for the rest of the morning. After lunch they sleep or watch TV.<sup>59</sup> The word 'rehabilitation' was not mentioned during my visit. The staff member's major concern was to prevent them from escaping.<sup>60</sup>

### *Spiritual enhancement*

A Brother from the Roman Catholic seminary visits the jail for about an hour once a week to teach the boys values formation. The boys were able to tell me what they had learnt in the values formation period.<sup>61</sup>

### *Education and training*

There was no programme of education mentioned and no sight of any educational resources. The warder said there was no time for lessons because tasks such as 'feeding' had to be carried out.<sup>62</sup> One boy said he had been able to attend school for a year whilst resident at Tahanan.

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<sup>59</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>61</sup> The data from interviews with these boys is quoted and discussed in 3.2.1.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

### *Recreational activities*

Afternoon activities included playing basketball, watching TV, sleeping, washing clothes and sleeping until the evening meal at 6 o'clock, after which boys could watch TV until bedtime at 8 o'clock. The responses of these teenagers manifested a great deal of boredom and a surprising amount of time spent sleeping. Pressed to say what else they did during the day, one boy replied, 'I pray .... I pray how to escape from this place.' This aroused laughter, but I doubted that he was joking. It became clear that there was no programme of activities in operation and no stimulus other than the TV set and the basketball net. There is a list of activities issued, but it stays at the warder's home because 'we don't have time to do the lectures so they don't happen.'<sup>63</sup> Asked what does happen, the warder said, 'Feeding. We are supposed to feed them at 7 pm, but we have to feed earlier because they try to escape if they are out after dark. Only the trusted ones can be outside to help with cooking and cleaning. Others have to be locked in when it's dark.'<sup>64</sup>

### *Discipline*

The prison warders worked a rotating shift pattern and their sole object was containment because they suffer fines deducted from their wages if any boys abscond.<sup>65</sup> They were not trained for their task. The warder complained that the boys behaved badly and tried

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008. In the Philippines, darkness falls at around 5.30 p.m. throughout the year.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

to escape: 'There was a toilet inside but there's a bad smell. We used to clean that every day but they covered it with stones and broke it. Now they have to use the outside toilet in the night and then they climb over the fence.'<sup>66</sup>

Resources were difficult to obtain. Many requests had been made, such as for external lights because, 'If they go to that place (the toilet) in the night it is very hard to follow and trace them.' There were plans to transfer the children to a new centre. Asked if it would be better, he replied, 'Yes but these kids, even if you put a very nice toilet for them they destroy it. They have no blankets because they were given some but they destroyed them in one week and wiped the floor with them.'

Asked why he thought the children behaved like that he replied, 'These kids are hard to discipline. They say sorry but after one week they do it again.' I enquired, 'Do you think it's made more difficult by this place?' and he admitted, 'Yes. There's a programme but we can't do it.' When a child commits a serious misdemeanour, a report is submitted, but staff members 'don't know what happens to it'. Questioned as to what punishment was given to boys when they had tried to escape, the warder replied, 'like a father' (miming an action of hitting the boy hard). I asked, 'You wallop them?' 'Yes. Sometimes they get high on drugs, then are brought back.'<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

***c) Reintegration***

Since many boys had remained in prison for years, evidently there was no procedure in place for rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. The warder believed that, ‘If these kids commit another mistake the parents should be arrested.’<sup>68</sup> Asked whether it is possible to change the boys’ lives, he replied, ‘It’s possible but the government’s not doing it.’ Asked how long it takes for a child to change, he said, ‘To reform from taking drugs – one month.’ I queried, ‘You think a boy can reform in one month?’ ‘Yes, but when he goes back to his home he goes back to his old ways.’ My final question, ‘What could you do that would really change those boys?’ elicited no response.

**3.1.4. Butuan Provincial Jail**

***a) The institution***

Butuan provincial jail is an adult prison run by the BJMP.

*Client admission*

Five of the six minors in jail when I visited had not yet been convicted of the crimes for which they had been arrested and detained two or three years previously. Their alleged crimes ranged from homicide, murder and attempted murder to rape, robbery and theft.

*Accommodation*

The jail consisted of concrete cells that formed three sides of a large quadrangle, one end

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<sup>68</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

of which was flanked by staff offices, including the reception desk. Each cell had iron bars and faced onto the cemented open space, resembling cages in a zoo. A marquee had been erected in the centre of the quadrangle, but this may not be a permanent feature. Paradoxically, there was something of a party atmosphere that day as the adult prisoners were entertaining their visitors in the central marquee. Loud music filled the air and refreshments were being served to the visitors.

#### *Case management*

Five of the boys were simply waiting until their cases would come to court and it did not appear that anyone was helping this to happen.

#### ***b) The programme***

##### *Structure of the day*

The six minors were allowed no part in this or any activity in which adult prisoners participated. The Juvenile Justice Act 9344 forbids minors to mix with adult prisoners in order to protect them from seasoned criminals so these boys, incarcerated in an adult jail, had to be kept apart from them. Consequently, the six youngsters were held in a small separate cell and allowed out to play basketball for half an hour at 6 a.m., before the adult prison population began its daily routine.

##### *Spiritual enhancement*

I was accompanied by the Prison Apostolate, who regularly visited prisoners and was able to negotiate access and act as interpreter during my visit. I did not see or hear any other evidence of spiritual input into the lives of these minors in prison.



### *Education and training*

Other than a little basic literacy teaching, the early morning basketball was their only activity; there was no rehabilitation programme and no education or training provided.

### *Recreational activities*

Typical information from the boys on this topic was, ‘We sleep or do nothing.’<sup>69</sup> The warder regretted the position the boys were in, but did not see what could be done to relieve the situation.<sup>70</sup>

### **c) *Reintegration***

In interview, it transpired that some boys had been imprisoned before, that family life was generally dysfunctional and that no attempts were being made to prevent the cycle of recidivism.

## **Summary**

This section described the situation in four jails in the Philippines in which children were found residing during the data collection phase of this research.

3.2. shows how children experience *alienation* before they come into conflict with the law and how this is exacerbated by imprisonment.

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<sup>69</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with staff member, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

## 3.2. Alienation

### 3.2.1. Introduction

This section considers the theme of *alienation* in the experience of imprisoned boys.<sup>71</sup> It traces the path by which boys become increasingly isolated from, rejected by and alienated from family and society, both before they go to prison and whilst in custody. It uses primary data from interviews with boys in prison and with boys transferred from prisons to rehabilitation centres, supplemented by comments from adults who worked with them, to illustrate the nature of this alienation and the ways in which it is expressed by the boys. This section identifies and explains the two main factors that contribute to alienation in the life stories of the boys: isolation from family (3.2.1.) and rejection by society (3.2.2.).

Carol Christ, writing about women writers, says that their spiritual quest ‘begins in an *experience of nothingness*’, which she describes as ‘emptiness in their own lives – in self-hatred, in self-negation, and in being a victim’.<sup>72</sup> Nicola Slee describes this experience, which she terms *alienation* as ‘a profound loss of self, of authentic connection with others, and of faith’.<sup>73</sup> This is manifested in feelings of ‘inadequacy, anxiety or dis-ease, amnesia and loss of feeling, an inability to act, a sense of being

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<sup>71</sup> See 1.4.

<sup>72</sup> Carol Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing: Women Writers on Spiritual Quest*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 13.

<sup>73</sup> Nicola Slee, *Women's Faith Development: patterns and processes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 81.

imprisoned or trapped, a lack of meaning and of sense of self.’<sup>74</sup> She found from her interviews with women that this alienation ‘goes by many names, yet shows certain similarities of form and significance.’<sup>75</sup>

Christ contends that this ‘significant feature of women’s spiritual lives’ is characterised by ‘a *lack* of movement, a sense of being stuck, the inability to grow and move forward’.<sup>76</sup> The boys in my study never used the word ‘alienation’, but some of them described similar feelings to those described by Slee and by Christ. Therapists in the rehabilitation centres also spoke to me about the loss of self and connection experienced by boys during their lives on the streets and in prison.<sup>77</sup>

### **3.2.2. Isolation from family**

For many of the boys interviewed, a process of alienation began at a very young age, with domestic strife and extreme poverty resulting in unhappiness in the home. Members of staff in several locations began explanations of why boys had come into conflict with the law in similar terms. For instance, a prison warder told me: ‘Children commit offences due to low living of parents, broken family, drinking, irresponsible parents’,<sup>78</sup> and a RRCY staff member explained further:

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<sup>74</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 82.

<sup>75</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 81.

<sup>76</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 81-82.

<sup>77</sup> For example, interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>78</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

Their lives in their homes were not harmonious; they have not experienced a happy life: family relationships, quarrelling, poverty. That's the main reason the child left home, lived on the street and took drugs to survive. Drugs and crimes are only a secondary factor.<sup>79</sup>

Similar explanations came from young men who had been in prison. When asked, 'Why were you on the streets?' Isaac replied 'Family problems, I wanted to evade them.'<sup>80</sup> Children in a dysfunctional family suffer neglect and, particularly when linked to extreme poverty, physical as well as emotional deprivation. Their basic needs for food, sleep, clothing and safety are not met. Frequently, violent domestic disputes lead to abuse of the boy, particularly when the man in the home is not his own father:

When nine years old, living with mother and stepfather, the latter abused him physically. Leonard with his mother and brother moved to another area, but the stepfather followed them. Because the stepfather abused Leonard, the brother killed him. The brother was not arrested; he ran away.<sup>81</sup>

Whereas girls tend to stay at home and help with household chores, boys go out on the streets in gangs.<sup>82</sup> If a boy is left to fend for himself, or left to his own devices for long periods, he may start to roam the streets with his friends and to find unlawful ways of obtaining food. Ramon, for instance, reported that he had not been living with his parents or attending school. He lived with his aunt and his uncle, who was at work most

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<sup>79</sup> Interview with staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/02/2008.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with a former resident, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

of the time, so that Ramon was ‘out with his friends with nothing to do’.<sup>83</sup>

Danilo had also lived on the streets of Manila, begging in the streets and in the park. He ‘took food from rubbish bins and held up people for money.’<sup>84</sup> Asked why he was on the streets at a young age, Danilo replied simply, ‘My Mum was irresponsible.’<sup>85</sup> His programme leader said, ‘It is not unusual for parents to encourage their children to steal food from small stores or street stalls for the family to eat.’<sup>86</sup>

In this situation of poverty, neglect and violence, the child becomes unhappy and does not know which way to turn. He has no suitable adults to draw on as role models as he grows into adolescence: ‘From my childhood I had no happiness in my life. My family were always quarrelling and killing each other. So I grew up learning only bad behaviour and went to prison. Because of that I felt my life was worthless ... I was hopeless.’<sup>87</sup>

The boys come from poor families and most have no religion. Sunday services are attended by very few people, although 85% are nominal Catholics.<sup>88</sup> There is an absence of moral guidance or religious or spiritual teaching in the home or community in which

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<sup>83</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

the boys live. Staff members in the NGOs are acutely aware of this: ‘it is an area most often lacking in the home. The parents are unable or unwilling to provide this kind of training to their children. Most children come from nominally Catholic Christian homes.’<sup>89</sup>

The majority of the boys interviewed had little or no education during their childhood. Consequently, they were not only illiterate and innumerate, but they had never learned self-discipline or had any social or life skills training. They knew only what they had learned from other boys on the streets and their prospects for getting legal paid employment were slender. Most told me that they had never, or rarely, been to school.<sup>90</sup> Even when they attend school, poverty has further implications for children from the streets. Nilda Flores-González in Puerto Rico found that the inability of teenagers to participate in extracurricular activities resulted in feelings of alienation from school and disconnection from peers, and many eventually dropped out.<sup>91</sup>

Families that constantly quarrel and fight generally break apart and that is the point at which the pre-adolescent or teenage boy is likely to leave home altogether. Finding that he has no longer any place to call home or where he feels wanted and can obtain food and shelter, he stays on the street all night as well as all day: ‘When I was eleven my

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>91</sup> Nilda Flores-González, *School Kids/Street Kids: Identity Development in Latino Students* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 87.

parents separated and I had no parents when I grew up.’<sup>92</sup> Danilo and his siblings each had a different father, but ‘none of them lived in the home and Danilo never knew his. He left home around 11 to 12 years.’<sup>93</sup>

On a number of occasions, boys related that they began to turn to drugs or crime during the time when the family broke up, for whatever reason: ‘When, at the age of 11, he found his mother, she didn’t want to know him. Consequently he ran away from home and became wayward and addicted to drugs.’<sup>94</sup> Others simply said they had become ‘stubborn’: ‘Two years ago his mother went to work in Japan and he was left with his uncle. He became a stubborn child and learned to steal. He stole a necklace and has been charged with robbery – snatching.’<sup>95</sup>

When the child begins to come into conflict with the law, his parents or other family members, who have become his legal guardians, often fail to show that they care or support him. For instance, Aaron, at 15, had been placed by the courts into the custody of his parents but, because they failed to attend his court hearing, he was put into the City jail until, aged 20, he was moved to a rehabilitation centre.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

Boys who live entirely on the streets are susceptible to the influence of their peers. Many of the boys voiced this as a factor in their progression towards criminal activities and substance abuse. Leonard said that, influenced by friends, he learned to steal and smoke. He was arrested by the police and put in jail. He and his friends stole DVDs.<sup>97</sup> Patrick also told me he was influenced by his friends and stole necklaces on more than one occasion.<sup>98</sup> For Jose the breaking point came when his grandmother died:

Jose was from a broken home, he never saw his parents. His grandmother took care of him. She got sick and died and during that time he became stubborn. He was around 17 at that time. Jose mostly lived on the streets all night and learned vices from his peers. He learned to steal and liked what he was doing. Eventually he was caught by the police and put in jail. The complainant brought charges.<sup>99</sup>

The child who grows up in circumstances with inadequate care and supervision is vulnerable to predatory adults who set out to exploit him for immoral or commercial purposes: 'My mother said my uncle would send me to school but my uncle made me work without pay. I got mad with my uncle and took his money. I spent 36,000 pesos and only returned 18,000. My uncle boxed me and I fell down and saw the scissors so I stabbed my uncle.'<sup>100</sup> My interpreter explained that 'it wasn't the boy's intention to kill his uncle. It was self defence because he was manhandled and couldn't bear the pain.'<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.



At the instigation of adults, the youths begin to use lethal weapons and are at risk of being drawn into dangerous activities with more serious consequences than snatching food or saleable goods from street vendors. ‘Ramon, at 9 years old, was already in the employ of a politician. At 17, he was arrested as part of a “hit gang” to slay a rival politician’ and, aged 18, was ‘arrested with a group of youths who were caught in possession of firearms’ during the pre-election gun ban.<sup>102</sup> Samuel, at the age of 17, was arrested by the Army for ‘participating in rebel combat with firearms’ and being ‘involved in Communist rebel activities’. Although kept in a government facility for four months, the army ‘could extract no information from him’. However, ‘his companions will think he is giving information about them and if he returns to his home he will be killed.’<sup>103</sup>

Drug abuse often begins with sniffing rugby to escape from pain and extreme hunger.<sup>104</sup> The practice is illegal in the Philippines and can lead to detention in jail, either for possession of illegal drugs or for crimes committed whilst under the influence of drugs. Allen, at 17, was placed in a penal centre for 18 months and then the city jail for two years on a drug charge.<sup>105</sup> Batani, 15 years old when I interviewed him, had, at a younger age, been arrested for sniffing rugby and sent to the drug abuse centre. He was currently charged, along with another boy because, ‘Together they broke into a bank and

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<sup>102</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>104</sup> See 1.2.1. and fn. 63.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

were caught by the security guards.’<sup>106</sup>

Sometimes the police pick up children from the streets and find that they cannot locate the family or guardians. Consequently, they place the children in jail as ‘a place of safety’. In Tahanan ng Kabataan, I found two nine-year-old boys who had been there three days and others below 15, who ‘stay here for safe keeping’.<sup>107</sup> I was told they would be ‘released to family’, but another youth, aged 24 had already been held there for 11 years, for an alleged crime that took place when he was 13. I was told that he was still waiting for the case to be dismissed and being ‘kept here as a place of safety.’<sup>108</sup> Boys are detained in jail, with or without charge, pending a court hearing. In the same prison, another boy reported, ‘I am now 13, and have been here two years.’<sup>109</sup> James told me, ‘I was in Butuan city jail for three months awaiting trial’, and Oscar said, ‘I was previously in the Provincial jail for six months.’<sup>110</sup>

Children are detained without trial and are frequently abandoned in prison by their families. Sometimes the family is ignorant of the whereabouts of the child or extreme poverty prevents them from travelling to visit him. One young prisoner said: ‘They have visited me seven times in three years. They have no money to pay fares. It’s 30 pesos

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>108</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>109</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

each way.’<sup>111</sup> Sometimes the family does not want the child at home and this leaves the authorities with a problem, as a staff member explained: ‘Also we don’t want to send a child back to a community that can’t accept him. One family didn’t want the boy back because they claimed he was a nuisance. Some parents just leave boys in jail and don’t want to see them again.’<sup>112</sup> Again, poverty has a part to play:

I brought one kid of nine years old to his mother. ‘What’s the problem sir?’ she said. ‘There’s no problem, but he’s your kid. You should be looking after him.’ They had a dozen kids. They’re unable to feed them. Being below 15, the boy stays at the prison for safe-keeping until he can be released to family. But his Mum got angry and said, ‘Why did you bring him back here? We pay our taxes. You look after him. Why did you bring him back here?’<sup>113</sup>

Some children are so alienated from their families by this stage that they do not even wish to go home. Members of staff typically told me: ‘some boys lie to the social worker because they don’t want them to know where their parents are if they had a bad experience at home.’<sup>114</sup>

However, prison cannot truthfully be described as ‘a place of safety’. During my field research, I was shocked by the conditions I witnessed in several jail locations and more shaken by some first-hand accounts from boys.<sup>115</sup> Chito said of his prison experience,

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<sup>111</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008. 30 pesos was, at the time, approximately 40 pence in GBP.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>113</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>115</sup> The conditions in the jails visited for this field research are described in 3.1.

‘There were only a few mats to sleep on and most of the boys just sleep on the dirty concrete floor.’<sup>116</sup> In addition to the physical hardship, lack of light, space or fresh air and the inadequate diet, boys are exposed to damp, rats, mosquitoes and contagious diseases such as scabies. There is also the violence of constant quarrelling, destructive vandalism and the ‘gang culture’, which is so prevalent in the jails that boys are often found to have tattoos that signify their allegiance to one gang or another.<sup>117</sup>

Boys arrive in rehabilitation centres physically scarred and emotionally traumatised by the brutal violence meted out in the jail. Gilbert, from the safe place of a RRCY, spoke eloquently, passionately and at length of what life had been like in the jail and what punishment boys were given there when they did something wrong. He confided, ‘I myself was handcuffed and 22 companions bashed me. I was very afraid.’ When I asked him what he had done to incur this punishment, he explained that it is the ‘Welcome party’ for newcomers. They are then locked in the inside cell for two weeks, being allowed out only for roll call.<sup>118</sup> Boys in another centre told me of abuse they had suffered in jail: ‘I was bashed with a paddle’ and ‘I was placed in a tiny dark cell for six months.’ A member of staff also told how boys who had been brought out of prisons had described how they had been ‘maltreated, suffering physical abuse and electric shock punishment’.

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<sup>116</sup> Interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with a boy, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

One youth had experienced such ‘maltreatment from police trying to make him talk to say who robbed a store, that he has a permanent misalignment of his spine.’<sup>119</sup> Shay Cullen writes frequently of violence and abuse suffered by boys when arrested: ‘Teenagers rescued from the Manila jails told of their harrowing experience of police torture and brutality. One boy showed his feet with the toenails extracted and cigarette burns on his neck.’ Conditions in the detention cells were described as ‘subhuman’.<sup>120</sup>

### **3.2.3. Rejection by society**

Boys who are released from jail face further problems that alienate them from society. In general, children in conflict with the law are ‘despised, unwanted and face prejudice’.<sup>121</sup> They are unwanted in the family or community; they cannot find employment and have no-one to care for them, to guide them or to pay for them to go to school. They suffer both isolation and alienation. This was stated explicitly in a presentation at one NGO:

Despite the degree of civilization and Christianization that our society may have achieved thus far, it is still an observable fact that a widespread significant segment of our society holds on to the view and attitude that children and youth who have experienced prison life are undesirable elements of the society. A released youth offender usually is an object of criticism and ridicule in the community; worse, he becomes automatically the prime suspect in any malfeasance and crime that may occur in the community. The stigma of being an ‘ex-offender’ is usually attached to him in

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<sup>119</sup> Interview with group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>120</sup> Shay Cullen, *Ending the Culture of Violence*, <http://www.preda.org/main/archives/2010/r10082501.html> accessed 7/9/2010. Cullen’s columns are published in The Manila Times, in publications in Ireland, the UK, Hong Kong and on this website. The videos can be viewed at <http://www.preda.org>

<sup>121</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

whatever he does and wherever he goes, and any worthy endeavors; the chances of living a normal life are more or less denied to him.<sup>122</sup>

Consequently, boys frequently return to prison, with or without charge, despite knowing how dreadful the experience can be. Some go out and return so many times that they lose count, as was described to me at one prison by a boy of 17 who said he was only ten when he first came.<sup>123</sup> Others had been in and out of jail for two years, escaping or being released and coming back.<sup>124</sup> I heard similar stories in most locations and the recidivism was not always for serious crimes: 'He got into a cycle of jail, rehabilitation, more jail, usually for fighting with other kids on the street. He has been in jail more times than he can count.'<sup>125</sup> The slow legal system works against them: 'Each time he was jailed for around two months before being released because the public attorneys are so busy they cannot deal with all the cases. It is usually five or six months between hearings.'<sup>126</sup>

Since the statute RA9344 was passed,<sup>127</sup> it has been possible for police and social workers to take street children in conflict with the law directly to an appropriate NGO such as PREDA, Balay Pasilungan or Ahon sa Kalye, if the directors agree to accept them. Previously, and still frequently at the time of my fieldwork, detention in a police

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<sup>122</sup> PowerPoint Presentation, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>123</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with group of boys, Tahanan Ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>127</sup> See 1.2.2.

cell or a prison was always the first step, even before the child was charged with any offence. ‘Those new arrivals will come from the jails where they are being held during their court cases.’<sup>128</sup> Hence, almost all the boys in the genuine rehabilitation programmes had already suffered at least one period (and often many more) in an inappropriate institution.

Sometimes boys had been moved from place to place with no say in the matter: This could be a jail: ‘He was in jail three months, was taken to CRADLE but then transferred to headquarters before being released to PREDA. Jose is now nearly 19.’<sup>129</sup> It could be a children’s home: ‘Ramon and a 13-year-old were then removed from the jail by DSWD and taken to Nayon ng Kabataan (Town of Youth); then, as this is not for CICL, Ramon was transferred to Ahon sa Kalye.’ It could even be a drug centre: ‘He was taken to the drug centre because in that area of Manila there was no other facility to take him.’<sup>130</sup> Inevitably, much of their formative childhood and adolescent development has been lost during these years. They have become traumatised and hardened by their early experience.

In several centres, staff members told me how this experience had affected the boys: ‘CICL are very hard to handle as they have often grown up on the streets and are hardened. Also they learn tough ways of coping when they are in the jails and bring

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<sup>128</sup> Interview with staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

these difficulties with them.<sup>131</sup> Staff members in rehabilitation centres also frequently spoke of the need to help boys to regain a sense of identity, self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence, all of which had been lost during the years of struggling to survive the ordeal of their young lives.

### **Section summary**

This section has tracked the typical course of the alienation identified in the stories of children who have been detained in prison. Not every boy experiences all contributing factors, but the data yield universal patterns in their life histories. They arrive in prison already isolated from their families and society and the period (or successive periods) of detention increases and exacerbates this sense of alienation. Isolation from family is emotionally harmful and retards spiritual and social development. Violence and abuse in prison is physically and emotionally harmful and boys become traumatised, depressed or angry. Rejection by society adds to their loss of identity, self-esteem and self-respect.

Michael Ungar contends that:

The processing of youths as young offenders subjects them to ... threats about their identity as it raises questions about, and alters, the labels these youths use to describe and define themselves. The placement of these youths in an institution and the disengagement from their communities reinforces this identity threat. Coping with that threat explains, in part, why young offenders choose delinquent identities when they return to their communities following incarceration.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Interview with staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>132</sup> Michael Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth* (Toronto: University of Toronto



Events and circumstances combine to contribute to the boys' feeling of 'nothingness', hopelessness, alienation and exclusion from normality. Lack of spiritual guidance or of suitable role models, coupled with an absence of education or vocational training leave them without a sense of direction in life.

### **Chapter summary**

Section 3.1. described four jail-type institutions in which children were found during the research phase of this study. In these, minors were held in custody with little or no programme of rehabilitation. 3.2. discussed *alienation* as an aspect of faith development. It demonstrated the process of alienation that frequently begins before children come into conflict with the law and is exacerbated by their incarceration in a place that does not meet their spiritual needs.

Chapter Four examines the work of governmental Regional Rehabilitation Centres for Youth and NGO rehabilitation programmes and discusses the processes of *awakening* and *spiritual transformation* that many boys experience.

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Press, 2004), 176.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **REHABILITATION, AWAKENING AND TRANSFORMATION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter addresses the rehabilitation process of boys released from prison and the spiritual development that can be engendered by a comprehensive therapeutic programme of care. It explains the rehabilitation programme that is established at each Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in the Philippines, followed by descriptions of the three RRCY establishments (4.1.) and the three NGO rehabilitation centres visited during fieldwork (4.2.). It examines the nature of *awakening* under five headings that reflect the process of spiritual awakening in these adolescent boys: *Realisation, Recognition, Enlightenment, Reflection* and *Finding identity* (4.3.) and discusses the evidence for the presence of the phenomenon of *spiritual transformation* emerging from the research data (4.4.).

### **4.1. Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Youth**

RRCYs are residential care facilities set up by the DSWD ‘to enable CICL to improve their social functioning’ and to ‘reintegrate CICL with their families and the

community’.<sup>1</sup> Three RRCY establishments were visited during the data collection phase of the research.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4.1.1. The RRCY programme**

The RRCY Vision reads: ‘Improved social protection and promote the rights and welfare of the poor and youth offenders.’<sup>3</sup> Services include ‘psycho-social care, homelife, educational, dietary, health, medical, recreational, cultural activities and spiritual enhancement’,<sup>4</sup> as shown in Table 4.1.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.dswd.gov.ph/index.php/advisories/55-dswd-programs-and-services-for-persons-with-disabilities/1961-dswd-programs-and-services-for-children> accessed 19/2/2010.

<sup>2</sup> One was visited twice, one once and one with a prior staff interview at the regional office. Data were collected at each centre by means of interviews with managers and members of staff, conducted tours of the facilities, conversations with boys and personal observation by the researcher.

<sup>3</sup> This statement was mounted on the wall of the reception area in a RRCY centre.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dswd.gov.ph/index.php/advisories/55-dswd-programs-and-services-for-persons-with-disabilities/1961-dswd-programs-and-services-for-children> accessed 19/2/2010.

<b>Social Services</b> Intake and assessment Treatment planning Implementation of treatment plans Evaluation Termination of the case Follow-up and after care Case records keeping	<b>Homelife Services</b> Personal care and other needs Food Work assignments Opportunity for economic activities
<b>Educational Service</b> School attendance for school-age residents and residents needing education Tutorial Development of special interests	<b>Dietary Services</b> Provision of appropriate meals to meet the needs of the residents
<b>Health Services</b> Provision of physical and dental examination to each resident on admission	<b>Medical intervention and Immunisation</b> Health education and sanitation Provision of sex education in accordance with the stage and development of children and youth under care Psychological and psychiatric evaluation and treatment
<b>Recreational and other Cultural Activities</b> Indoor and outdoor activities	<b>Spiritual Enhancement</b> Bible reading Attendance to Sunday mass

*Table 4.1. RRCY Programme services*

In all RRCYs, the programme is based on a ‘Therapeutic Community Modality’ adapted from drug rehabilitation programmes.<sup>5</sup> This provides treatment, support services and

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dswd.gov.ph/index.php/advisories/55-dswd-programs-and-services-for-persons-with->

interventions, as shown in Table 4.2.

Treatment Interventions	Support Services and Interventions
Counselling services Milieu therapy Behavioural modification Therapeutic community	Competency and life skills development Vocational training, livelihood and productivity program Socio-cultural and recreational program Spiritual enhancement program Leadership and skills training Medical and dental services Community volunteer projects

*Table 4.2. RRCY Interventions*

#### **4.1.2. Argao RRCY**

##### ***a) The institution***

##### *Management*

The 21-strong multi-disciplinary staff team at Argao RRCY includes a Supervisory Manager, three social workers, a psychologist, eight houseparents, an accredited teacher, assistant teachers and an ALS teacher.

##### *Client admission*

Established in 1981, Argao RRCY had, at the time of my visit, 64 resident boys aged 15-17, from Cebu city and the province.<sup>6</sup> Admission is normally by court order: some boys are not yet convicted and some have been given suspended jail sentences on the

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[disabilities/1961-dswd-programs-and-services-for-children](#) accessed 19/2/2010.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 20/2/2008. It was intended that a NGO, in partnership with local government, would establish a facility for under 15s in need of centre-based intervention, where community-based alternatives are deemed unsuitable.

condition that they complete a rehabilitation programme.<sup>7</sup> The centre is the only one serving an area with a population of about 20 million.<sup>8</sup> Boys stay for between six months and a year.

### *Accommodation*

The centre is located about two hours by road from Cebu City in the rural, tropical rainforest area of Argao, which has lush vegetation and numerous banana plantations. It has no cells, bars or locked gates, except for the entrance gate, which has security guards. Boys roam freely in the attractive and pleasant outdoor space. The four dormitories, each with its own toilets and bathrooms, are basic but almost certainly better than in the boys' homes.<sup>9</sup> At lunchtime, during my visit, the boys sat in the dining room in well-behaved groups, as in a restaurant. The meal, supervised by some boys and one staff member, looked appetising and well presented. In a separate half-way house for boys about to be released, they cook and, largely, care for themselves, but join the others for programmed activities.

### ***b) The programme***

#### *Structure of the day*

The daily structured programme begins at 5 a.m. with morning devotion, prayer and

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<sup>7</sup> Time spent at a RRCY is not considered to be a stay in jail.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>9</sup> Field notes, 22/2/2008.

‘Bible sharing’.<sup>10</sup> Outdoor exercise (military drill<sup>11</sup> or physical exercise, such as aerobics), cleaning surroundings, kitchen and other chores and mandatory bathing all take place before breakfast. Whilst some go to local schools, ‘out of school’ youth attend carpentry, education or other classes. There is a community meeting before preparing and eating lunch, then siesta. The afternoon brings school attendance or assignments, allowing an hour of recreation (such as basketball, volleyball, table tennis or chess) before bathing, dinner and prayer time. Evenings are spent doing homework and watching television (on Fridays and Saturdays) until ‘lights off’ at 9.30 p.m. Saturday mornings involve laundry and cleaning rooms and communal areas before a Protestant Pastor conducts Bible study.<sup>12</sup> Lunch and siesta are followed by an afternoon of film showing and recreational activities.

### *Case management*

Some staff members attend training in psychotherapy, enabling a team approach to behaviour modification therapy, using structured learning modules based on the boys’ needs and issues, in categories such as sex offences, aggressive assault and theft. Social workers assist boys by following their court cases, escorting them to court and to their home visits and making progress notes and reports. They give counselling and, when

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<sup>10</sup> This term is used in centres to mean a time for reading, discussing and teaching from a Bible passage, relating its message to the boy’s personal lives.

<sup>11</sup> ‘The drill is standard practice in secondary school and so the boys do it here too so that they will not find it hard when they return to school on release.’ Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>12</sup> This pastor is from the protestant Seventh Day Adventists, but he ‘must refrain from making comments on other religions.’ Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

appropriate, refer boys to the psychologist, conduct case conferences with the psychologist, houseparents and other appropriate persons, co-ordinate with local social workers and submit pre-release reports.

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Once a month a priest comes to celebrate Sunday Mass; otherwise, lay Catholic ministers lead Bible study and a religious service appropriate for the boys. Occasionally, visitors performing 'Community outreach' bring a priest to celebrate Mass; they bring gifts and cookies and spend time with the boys. These clerical offices and activities, combined with morning devotions, the Saturday Bible study and regular set prayers combine to form the programme component named 'Spiritual Enhancement'. This is found to be effective: 'Based on our experience, the clients here who are attending religious activities, it has great influence in their lives. Some want to become pastors. Most realise what they did is wrong because they learn from the pastors. It plays a big part in rehabilitation.'<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, there was both Catholic and Protestant input here.

### *Education and training*

ALS graduates can go to high school or college and 'all boys are equipped with skills before release': structured activities include farming, cow and pig management, masonry, carpentry and hollow-block making,<sup>14</sup> plumbing, renovation work, carpentry,

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>14</sup> Hollow-blocks are moulded cement blocks used in building construction.



building and electrical repairs.<sup>15</sup> Some residents undertake vocational training in the city: culinary arts, basic cosmetology and hairdressing. A small building on the campus was destined to become a bakery in order to provide training for the boys, baked goods for the centre and some income.<sup>16</sup> There was a basketball court, small, neat gardens and, beyond the main campus, farmland where boys learn to grow vegetables, maize, jack-fruit, coconuts and bananas, both for consumption and for sale.<sup>17</sup>

### *Recreational activities*

Time is allocated daily for boys to play basketball, volleyball, table tennis or chess, to watch television or films and for personally chosen activities, such as playing musical instruments. Outings, planned quarterly as a reward for good behaviour for boys who have achieved well, entail a visit to a plaza<sup>18</sup> and a meal out, accompanied by staff members, who believe that ‘It is good for boys to go out rather than continually being in a confined setting and atmosphere.’<sup>19</sup>

### *Discipline*

It is emphasised during each boy’s induction that reports of improved behaviour must be submitted to the court before he can be released. Houseparents implement the rules,

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>16</sup> Field notes, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>17</sup> Field notes, 22/2/2008.

<sup>18</sup> A plaza is a kind of public park.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

supervise regular activities, such as bathing and homework and have overall responsibility. However, democratic participation is encouraged and monthly elections are held to allocate chores.<sup>20</sup> A committee of boys (the ‘Expeditor group’), with adult facilitation, decides upon and polices the rules. During morning meeting, when each staff department is represented, any rule-breakers are ‘called up’ and boys give them advice and decide punishments for misbehaviour, such as failing to do an assigned chore, not bathing or missing class. Repeated violations incur facing the ‘Expeditors’, which entails the offender listening while counsellors scold, advise, befriend and, if possible, obtain a promise not to re-offend. Further violations (and serious offences such as smoking) incur a punishment that involves sitting facing the wall for an hour, reciting the ‘therapeutical community philosophy’.<sup>21</sup> Conflicts between boys are also settled within the group, but fighting is minimal due to the rules and ‘fear of facing the wall’.<sup>22</sup>

### ***c) Reintegration***

Most boys may visit home for a few hours each quarter and some families visit the centre. Before release, a case conference is held to discuss whether the family and the community is ready to receive the boy and whether it is safe for the boy to return home or whether there may be a better alternative, such as to live with other relatives. Staff members discuss the availability of local social worker support and what resources are

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

available, such as help to find suitable employment.<sup>23</sup> Aftercare is the responsibility of the local DSWD,<sup>24</sup> but there is little confidence in adequate services being available since the DSWD's obligation to submit a report six months after release is not always fulfilled.

If a discharged boy re-offended, he could return but that had not occurred. If community and family factors stay the same, these can create the possibility of re-offending, which is beyond the control of centre staff.<sup>25</sup>

There is no feedback about discharged boys, except for a few, who visit and report their achievements. One, who trained in building and runs a business in Canada, revisited twice and talked to residents about his success. Another is a qualified psychologist, employed by a city NGO. During a recent festival, an ex-resident talked to the boys and the public. The occasion was marked by a 'media blitz' and he was welcomed with a band and told, 'We are very proud of you.'<sup>26</sup> Current residents listened eagerly and revered him as a role-model, seeing that his success depended on the way he had behaved and responded to the programme. A reunion was being planned to invite more successfully reintegrated former residents to speak to current residents.

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<sup>23</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Social Welfare and Development (Philippines).

<sup>25</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 22/2/2008.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 22/2/2008.

Boys tend to judge success by markers such as speaking well and in English, the acquisition of material possessions, a good education and the ability to travel abroad. Staff members consider boys successful when they are following careers, such as one who became a priest and another who became a police officer, but felt that he did not want to behave in the same way as the police who had ill-treated him.<sup>27</sup>

#### **4.1.3. Gingoog RRCY**

##### ***a) The institution***

###### *Management*

Gingoog RRCY is supervised by the Head of Centre, supported by a Social Welfare Officer (SWO), social workers, houseparents, teachers, trainers and administrative staff. A psychologist is employed to cover all three RRCY in the region.<sup>28</sup>

###### *Client admission*

At the time of my visit, there were 17 boys in residence; 37 boys had been admitted in the year since its establishment. Admission criteria are based on court referrals for boys given suspended sentences and a compulsory period of rehabilitation.

###### *Accommodation*

The centre comprised several single storey buildings set in spacious, attractive

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 22/2/2008.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

grounds.<sup>29</sup> With no locked doors or barred cells, it appeared homely and lively, with freedom of movement and access.<sup>30</sup> The ‘social hall’ in which we were entertained was a covered, outdoor area with a slightly raised stage and sufficient space to play sports such as volleyball in wet weather.<sup>31</sup> The gardens were neat and there was a separate staff house and a tropical fruit orchard.<sup>32</sup>

### *Services provided*

Services include medical check-ups and treatment for mental or physical health and dental problems. Counselling needs are discussed by the rehabilitation staff team to determine individual needs. Legal services are provided to boys with ongoing court cases. A report on each minor must be submitted every three months and, when a boy has complied with his rehabilitation plan, a final report is submitted for the dismissal of his case. The centre provides the boys with clothing, toiletries and food.<sup>33</sup>

### ***b) The programme***

Staff members are trained in the Therapeutic Community Approach Modality and the programme published in the RRCY manual is adapted to form the basis for the

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<sup>29</sup> Field photographs, Argao RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>30</sup> Field notes, Argao RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>31</sup> Field photographs, Argao RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>32</sup> Field photographs, Argao RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with a staff member, 22/2/2008. For these provisions, the local government where the crime was committed contributes one third (or two thirds in the city) and the national government pays the remainder. Donations in kind are sought from members of the public and organisations.

structured programme, as outlined in 4.1.

### *Structure of the day*

Houseparents, working in shifts to provide constant care, organise a Group Living Schedule. They teach boys to care for themselves and their homes, paying attention to personal hygiene and personal relationships in order to develop self-esteem and skills that boys can apply when they go home. The daily routine is similar to that at Argao and other RRCY.<sup>34</sup>

### *Case management*

‘Admission to the centre brings about immediate substantial changes’ in each boy’s life.<sup>35</sup> A personalised intervention plan is created by the psychologist, with set goals to achieve, over a period of one year, although, if a boy achieves them quickly and a final report is accepted by the courts, he may stay less than six months. The individual rehabilitation plan includes methods to change conduct into acceptable behaviour by means of practical skills development and occupational training and ‘the opportunity to enhance spiritual relationship through Bible study and attendance at Mass.’<sup>36</sup> The social worker undertakes individual assessments, discusses these with the staff team to decide on appropriate action, gives ongoing support to the staff and counsels boys.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> As described in 4.1.1. and 4.1.2.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Spiritual enhancement activities include the monthly performance of Sunday Mass and the input of local voluntary religious groups. In values formation classes, the lecturer explains ‘the value of family, of a loving God, and community values’.<sup>38</sup> However, staff members assert that spiritual teaching runs throughout all aspects of the programme, is vital to the process of rehabilitation and brings about visible change in the lives of boys.<sup>39</sup>

### *Education and training*

Minors are sent to school, if possible, and there is on-site provision for formal education, non-formal education and training in practical skills. The city technical employment office provides vocational training in carpentry and electrical engineering; there are opportunities to learn printing, designing, hollow-block building, goat and sheep raising and gardening.

### *Recreational activities*

Boys can play sports and games, watch television, read, draw, do gardening, play music or enjoy other recreational activities. Once a month, there is an outing, perhaps to a beach resort or the Task Force swimming pools. On these outings, boys come into contact with the public: ‘It’s monotonous to stay here, so they need outsiders.’<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008. These ideas are discussed in 4.4.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

### *Discipline*

Boys are treated as individuals and counselling is based on unacceptable or positive behaviour; a misdemeanour is treated as an opportunity to proceed with behaviour modification. Where punishment is considered necessary, this takes the form of extra chores, such as sweeping paths, during leisure time.

#### ***c) Reintegration***

The rehabilitation programme is planned with a view to eventual reintegration into the community:

We encourage residents to develop good values in the street. We show that good deeds are appreciated. It helps to boost their self-esteem. There are social, cultural and educational activities. These help the boys to develop leadership. They learn how to express their ideas, opinions and talents.<sup>41</sup>

When reports prove that the programme has been ‘wholly productive’ for the individual child, his case can be dismissed.<sup>42</sup> He leaves with no criminal record, enabling him to renew his life and apply for a job.

#### **4.1.4. Patin-ay RRCY**

##### ***a) The institution***

#### *Client admission*

Patin-ay RRCY accepts 15-18 year old boys, plus older youths with retrospective court

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.



cases resulting in referral. At the time of my visit, there were just seven residents, but more were expected soon (boys currently held in jails awaiting court decisions). One resident, with no court case, had been placed there ‘on a diversion programme for character building’.<sup>43</sup>

### *Accommodation*

The accommodation comprised a range of low level buildings set in spacious grounds in a rural setting.<sup>44</sup> In the residents’ cottage, a long, light, airy dormitory, with views of the garden, contained a line of single beds, each with foam mattresses and three pillows, and a set of beautiful wooden lockers in which boys hung their shirts and kept their personal property tidily. There was a kitchen-diner and classroom. Outdoor areas – 1.7 hectares in all – were used for vocational training (including growing vegetables and pig husbandry), sports and cultural and leisure activities.<sup>45</sup>

### ***b) The programme***

#### *Structure of the day*

Weekdays and weekends are structured so that, as far as possible, boys experience life as they would in a good family home, except that they rarely go outside the parameters of the centre. During the day, there is the usual programme of RRCY structured activities,

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>44</sup> Field photographs, 5/3/2008.

<sup>45</sup> Field notes, 05/03/2008.

home-life services and spiritual input.<sup>46</sup>

### *Case management*

Each boy has an individual treatment plan, which is monitored and assessed quarterly. A psychologist, 'bought-in' from the local hospital, provides therapy for anger-management and conflict-resolution.<sup>47</sup>

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Spiritual input is in the form of Bible-sharing and values formation under the supervision of a priest. Boys attend a local church, with a houseparent. Visiting members of YFC lead activities, music and dance sessions. 'The spiritual aspect of the programme is an important one in bringing about change in the boys and it is an area most often lacking in the home' because 'parents are unable or unwilling to provide this kind of training for their children.'<sup>48</sup> Most children come from nominally Catholic Christian homes; the one Moslem resident attended church with the others, but his religion was respected and the staff did not expect continued attendance after he left the centre.<sup>49</sup>

### *Education and training*

If the child is willing, and would benefit from it, he can attend a local mainstream

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008. The programme is described in 4.1.2 b).

<sup>47</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

school. Otherwise, non-formal education is available and vocational training with TESDA<sup>50</sup> is considered. I observed a bookcase of reading matter labelled ‘Mind Library’, with the caption: ‘Read today, lead tomorrow’.<sup>51</sup> Boys participate in cooking and household chores. They are offered training in hollow-block making, carpentry, driving and tailoring. One houseparent, an agricultural graduate, teaches farming and animal husbandry. Boys tend the flower garden and take care of the fish pond. They grow vegetables and rear chickens and pigs, sharing the net income from these ventures. They had made and sold lanterns, before Christmas, earning from their sale.

### *Recreational activities*

Recreational activities include playing chess and sports, such as basketball, darts and table tennis. Boys enjoy outings to the swimming pool and to the local festival of music, drama, games and fireworks, with a communal feast of barbecued fish. Watching television is allowed up to two hours per day, after chores are done, with films being monitored by staff.

### *Discipline*

‘Staff members find CICL very difficult to handle as they have often grown up on the streets and are hardened. In addition, they learn tough ways of coping when they are in the jails and bring these difficulties with them.’<sup>52</sup> They do not generally break or spoil

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<sup>50</sup> Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

<sup>51</sup> Field notes, 5/3/2008.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

things, but sometimes one may throw a tantrum ‘get angry and bash doors’.<sup>53</sup> There is no chastisement such as boys experienced in jail. A small misdemeanour might result in loss of leisure time with extra tasks to perform, such as cleaning, sweeping or weeding. Serious transgressions are dealt with by guidance and two hours counselling, culminating in being asked to sign a contractual commitment not to repeat the offence.<sup>54</sup> ‘They do respond to this kind of programme, but they need a minimum of six months to benefit sufficiently and sometimes longer, the maximum being three years.’<sup>55</sup>

### ***c) Reintegration***

From the start, there is liaison with the local social workers who work with the family and community to sustain the progress made in the centre.<sup>56</sup> After release, boys are supported by means of a ‘Livelihood Programme’, which provides assistance for their continuing education and parental seminars, monitored by the DSWD, which is responsible for their aftercare and follow-up. The aim is to sustain what boys have acquired in the centre until they can finish schooling and learn a job.<sup>57</sup>

At the time of my visit, this RRCY had recently been established and the staff had no ‘success stories’ to relate. Since assessment, behaviour modification and evaluation is

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<sup>53</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>55</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

carried out on an individual basis, staff looked for positive improvements in behaviour and mindset as indicators of success.

### **Section summary**

This section described the work of three government Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Youth in which boys transferred from jails were undergoing programmes of rehabilitation. Each centre follows a comprehensive programme of service designed to improve the lives of boys, to rehabilitate and reintegrate them back into society. The boys have constant support and the programme is underpinned by spiritual teaching and counselling.

## **4.2. NGO Rehabilitation programmes**

This section describes the CICL programmes of the Ahon sa Kalye Ministries (4.2.1), Balay Pasilungan (4.2.2.) and the PREDA Foundation (4.2.3.). Each is independently operated and funded by voluntary contributions.

### **4.2.1. Ahon sa Kalye Grace Home**

#### ***a) The institution***

The Tagalog title ‘Ahon sa Kalye’ means ‘Rise up from the street’. Ahon sa Kalye Ministries, an NGO initiated in 2002, is ‘a comprehensive social development initiative in a Christian perspective that formulates projects for disadvantaged sectors of

Philippine society', specifically street people.<sup>58</sup> Its CICL work began in 2004, with a small residential facility called Grace Home.<sup>59</sup>

### *Management*

The Grace Home project founder-leaders are a practising attorney-at-law and her husband, a protestant church pastor. They subsidise the rent and running expenses of Grace Home, the only Protestant Christian programme for CICL youth in Manila,<sup>60</sup> from their personal income because the DSWD refers youngsters, but allocates few resources and no financial support.<sup>61</sup> However, a DSWD officer, who visits monthly, intends to document the project as a pattern for handling children who have been in armed conflict situations and DSWD staff members have pleaded with the leaders not to close because it is the only NGO in the district with a CICL licence.<sup>62</sup>

### *Objectives*

The vision, mission and goal of Ahon sa Kalye Ministries are shown in Table 4.3.

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<sup>58</sup> [http://www.geocities.com/ahon\\_sa\\_kalye/org.html](http://www.geocities.com/ahon_sa_kalye/org.html) accessed 3/10/2009.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 15/2/2008. Research data used for this section is taken from interview notes, field notes and photographs and the project's documentation on its printed leaflets and website.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 15/2/2008.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008. The leaders find that the Catholic Church has Government funding and support for its work in education and in social work, whereas Evangelicals are in the minority and can only submit proposals for building.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 15/2/2008.

<b>Vision</b> We envision transformed lives of street children and their families with honor and dignity to become responsible members of society.	<b>Mission</b> To minister God’s unfailing love to all men, specifically to street children and underprivileged families.	<b>Goal</b> To provide transformation programs for street children and their families through education, skills training and income generating projects.
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*Table 4.3. Ahon sa Kalye Vision, Mission and Goal*

The NGO aims to empower people to transform their lives by means of what it terms a ‘four ladder approach’, as shown in Table 4.4. The CICL programme is one aspect of its work. These four steps, remedial, rehabilitative, developmental and preventive, form the basis of the rehabilitation programme that begins for each boy when he enters the Grace Home.

<b>Remedial</b>  AHON SA KALYE (Rise up from the Street)  Empower individuals to make lifetime decision towards transformation.	<b>Rehabilitative</b>  AHON SA KAHIRAPAN (Rise up from Poverty)  Empower individuals with the basic knowledge required in order to earn an honest and decent living.
<b>Developmental</b>  AHON SA KAMANGMANGAN (Rise up from Ignorance)  Empower individuals through continuous education and training.	<b>Preventive</b>  AHON SA KADILIMAN (Rise up from Hopelessness)  Empower individuals with the right attitude, basic learning and skills to face the reality and future.

*Table 4.4. Ahon sa Kalye’s ‘four ladder’ programme*

#### *Client admission*

A typical case referred by DSWD might be of a minor, found in possession of firearms having been employed by adults to join a ‘hit gang’, but abandoned when arrested, or having participated in rebel combat, making it unsafe for him to return to his family

home because he would be labelled ‘a rebel’ and killed. Others might be arrested for actual or attempted crimes such as rape, violence or theft and referred to Grace Home as an alternative to imprisonment.<sup>63</sup>

### *Accommodation*

At the time of my visit, three boys resided in Grace Home – a small house comprising a living room, a bedroom (with two double bunks) and a kitchen.<sup>64</sup> The living room contained a wooden table and benches, an old wicker sofa, a television and a computer. The Vision, Mission and Goal statements were posted on the wall. It appeared to be a pleasant, modest home similar to others in the suburban neighbourhood and blending into the surroundings.<sup>65</sup>

### ***b) The programme***

#### *Structure of the day*

Each day begins with ‘devotion’ before the boys leave for education or training classes. On Mondays, there is a longer devotion, sharing time and weekly evaluation. Residents attend weekly church prayer meetings, Sunday school and church services.<sup>66</sup> On Saturdays, they perform household chores and ‘service in the community’ (receiving payment for grass-cutting and small maintenance tasks in the home-owners’ association)

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>64</sup> Field notes, Grace Home, 16/02/2008.

<sup>65</sup> Field notes, Grace Home, 16/02/1008.

<sup>66</sup> Internal documentation, Grace Home, 2/2008.



and enjoy recreation and the church Youth Fellowship.<sup>67</sup> Although the daily routine is displayed, the leaders emphasise the home setting rather than a regimented programme.

### *Case management*

Another Protestant pastor sleeps at Grace Home as a houseparent. The leaders guide and counsel the boys, undertake 'discipleship' and generally act as parents towards them, always 'on call' if not present.<sup>68</sup>

### *Spiritual enhancement*

The leaders want to change the boys' lives for the better. Their experience shows that boys need to stay for at least a year to be transformed: 'it is hard to change youths who are in the habit of stealing.'<sup>69</sup> The project calls itself a 'faith-based organisation' that employs a 'spiritually-based method'.<sup>70</sup> Leaders say they do not impose religion on the boys. Nonetheless, they take them to church worship services, enrol them in Christian camps and expect them to participate in daily 'devotions' that comprise extemporary prayers, Bible reading and exposition, discussion and pastoral advice. Most clients are from nominally Catholic homes and may have gone to church occasionally, but have had no 'feeding' or 'discipleship'.<sup>71</sup> The Grace Home programme offers Bible-based

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

teaching for Christian living. Leaders emphasise the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and believe that the evangelical way leads to a change of life.<sup>72</sup>

### *Education and training*

Residents take the Accreditation and Equivalency Tests of the ALS at Elementary or Secondary School level and attend a government-sponsored programme incorporated into the 'Literacy and Livelihood' curriculum of the local Elementary School. This includes basic literacy, using content relevant to teenagers, and vocational and community-based modules, for literate 'out of school youth'.<sup>73</sup> The youths also enrol in a Training Centre, whose motto is: 'I am here to learn how to live'.<sup>74</sup> The programme is government funded, fees are low and successful students receive accredited certificates that are recognised by employers.

Grace Home leaders were planning a sustainable project, possibly mushroom farming, to provide another learning experience and assist the project financially.<sup>75</sup> The mushroom farmer agreed to supply starter materials and training;<sup>76</sup> the enterprise is productive, requires little space and has a ready local market.<sup>77</sup> Leaders also sought micro-loans to

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>73</sup> Field notes, 15/2/2008.

<sup>74</sup> Field notes, 15/2/2008.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 17/2/2008.

<sup>76</sup> Field notes, 15/2/2008. In a small, darkened shed stood wooden frames made to hold the growing medium, made from wood shavings, packed into polythene tubes with an opening at each end for oyster mushroom spores to be introduced and left to grow.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 17/2/2008.

equip boys, trained in areas such as automotive skills, to set up small businesses and envisaged a countryside facility that would give opportunities for farming and other vocational training.<sup>78</sup>

### *Recreational activities*

Boys attend the Tagalog-speaking church, where they learn Christian worship songs and ‘identify with them’.<sup>79</sup> At weekends, they also participate in church youth activities.<sup>80</sup> On Sunday afternoons, the Grace Home ‘family’ has lunch at the mall<sup>81</sup> and goes to the cinema. Boys live and work in the community and join with peer group activities, such as sports, where appropriate.

### *Discipline*

A leader said: ‘if a person wants to change and someone wants to help him, it’s easy. It needs a new person.’<sup>82</sup> He explains to the youths: ‘if you keep on sinning you choose evil. It’s a spiritual battle, in which we’ll help and guide you to find the right way.’<sup>83</sup> He tells boys he is not judging them or saying ‘you’re bad’, but that in every sin there is a consequence; then he explains hope and God’s forgiveness.<sup>84</sup> If they have done wrong,

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<sup>78</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 17/2/2008.

<sup>79</sup> Field notes, 14/2/2008.

<sup>80</sup> Field notes, 13/2/2008.

<sup>81</sup> Field notes, 15/2/2008.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>83</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

he reminds them of sin and says, 'It's your problem' because they need to become responsible for their own actions.<sup>85</sup> Thus, spiritual teaching is integrated into all aspects of living in the Grace Home, training, discipline and rehabilitation.

For the leaders, permanent change is about changing mindset.<sup>86</sup> They see men and boys in slum and shanty housing areas 'lazing around, drinking, playing cards or doing nothing' and say that 'many boys learn this way of life from their fathers'. Most poor families have many children and 'often when they become too many to keep the father leaves.'<sup>87</sup>

However, many families can earn sufficient income for their needs by running small businesses on the street.<sup>88</sup> Young men sell newspapers or small commodities to the motorists; boys help to fill the jeepneys<sup>89</sup> or assist drivers out into the traffic and receive tips. To work and provide a useful service, in an honest manner, is better than begging or stealing. With a small regular income, the children can eat and even go to school. Thus, it is important to teach boys how to spend their time profitably and what to do with money they earn.<sup>90</sup> The Grace Home pastor does not like them to 'hanker after' such

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>88</sup> For instance, one day in the street he met a woman in her 60s who makes egg sandwiches, netting 180 pesos profit for each batch. Her only home was her painted cart, but at least she was providing for herself with dignity and not begging.

<sup>89</sup> A jeepney is a kind of public bus, a common form of transport in the Philippines.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

things as upgrades to their cell phones, but tries to ‘teach them to save in case one of their family becomes ill or has some other urgent need’. He says ‘it’s a hard lesson for a teenager to learn.’<sup>91</sup>

### *c) Reintegration*

The boys live, train, work and spend their leisure time in the Grace Home ‘family’ and the community. Since they go to college or paid employment and are taken to the shopping mall,<sup>92</sup> the cinema and church, there is not a practical problem of reintegration with society when they leave. What is seen as important is the transformation that needs to take place in them as people so that they become able to live responsible and fulfilling lives when they are no longer supervised.<sup>93</sup>

During the past three years, about twenty boys had been through the Ahon sa Kalye programme. Leaders maintain contact with boys who have left, as they telephone and come back for reassurance and support.<sup>94</sup> One of my interviewees lived at home with his family and another lived in a Christian foster home. Boys spoke of personal changes they had experienced since coming to the Grace Home. They reported changes in relationships with God and with other people.<sup>95</sup> They had changed their attitudes, their

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>92</sup> On my field visit, I observed that, on arrival at the Mall of Asia, boys were allowed to ‘pair up’ and look around independently of the leaders, meeting up at a set time about two hours later.

<sup>93</sup> This process of transformation is discussed in 4.4.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 14/2/2008.

sense of purpose in life and their dreams for the future.<sup>96</sup>

#### **4.2.2. Balay Pasilungan**

##### ***a) The institution***

When FREELAVA<sup>97</sup> volunteers discovered the dire conditions and abuse suffered by adults and children who had been tortured, jailed without charge or trial, or left languishing in prison,<sup>98</sup> they sought to reduce human rights violations by attending to basic needs and instituting ‘programmes of cultural and sports activities, literacy classes, limited economic assistance and a spiritual ministry in the jails.’<sup>99</sup> In a tragic incident in 1995, two boys rescued from jail were shot dead by police (assuming they had escaped). Following this, FREELAVA established Balay Pasilungan<sup>100</sup> as a shelter and rehabilitation centre for young offenders of Cebu province, operating as a half-way house for young offenders to move from jail to the community.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> The data from interviews with these boys is examined and discussed in 4.4.

<sup>97</sup> Free Rehabilitation, Economic, Education and Legal Assistance Volunteers Association, Inc. (FREELAVA) is a non-governmental organisation established in 1983 by lawyer Winefreda Geonzon. When Geonzon became the Legal Aid Executive Director of the Philippines' Bar in Cebu City, she set out to ‘reverse the injustices and abuses of the legal system left behind by the Marcos regime, by offering free legal aid to prisoners and victims of human rights violations.’ <http://www.rightlivelihood.org/geonzon.pdf> accessed 24/2/2008.

<sup>98</sup> These included ‘poor or non-existent sanitary facilities, chronic overcrowding, concrete floors with no sleeping mats and little protection against assaults by fellow prisoners.’ <http://www.rightlivelihood.org/geonzon.pdf> accessed 24/2/2008.

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.rightlivelihood.org/geonzon.pdf> accessed 24/2/2008. After Geonzon's death in 1990, FREELAVA continued to maintain free legal aid to prisoners in need, to offer basic legal rights training, to hold paralegal clinics in depressed communities, to provide formal educational assistance to more than four hundred children and young people and to grant money to their parents for income-generating projects.

<sup>100</sup> Balay Pasilungan literally means ‘house shelter’.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

### *Objectives*

The Balay Pasilungan programme ‘aims at increasing the possibility and capability’ of CICL to ‘reintegrate to the community by re-establishing their relationship with the society immediately after their release from prison confinement.’<sup>102</sup>

<b>Release and Preparation</b>	<b>Admission of Ex-offenders to the Centre</b>	<b>Self-Sustainable Programs</b>
Jail visitation Case follow-ups Rehabilitation Information dissemination Family/community orientation Child orientation	Continuing counselling sessions Psychological testing, Analysis and treatment Medical testing and check-up Case handling and management Value formation seminars Socio-cultural programs Sports Drug education/awareness and treatment	Preparation for school requirements Enrolment for formal and non-formal classes Skills and Manpower Training Career assessment programme Family re-integration Referral to other institution for long-term assistance and programme Continuing communication

*Table 4.5. Balay Pasilungan services*

### *Services provided*

The services provided by FREELAVA have three phases, as shown in Table 4.5. The first begins while the children are still imprisoned. FREELAVA members work to secure their release and, meanwhile, prepare the child and family to agree to the diversion programme.<sup>103</sup> The wishes of the child prevail, but if he fails to come following a court order, or later runs away, FREELAVA must inform the court. Staff

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<sup>102</sup> FREELAVA Power Point Presentation, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

members show photos of Balay Pasilungan to demonstrate what kind of place it is – an open centre, with no bars.<sup>104</sup> The second phase consists of a comprehensive residential rehabilitation programme. Information about the child and his needs is analysed and ‘appropriate intervention’ is designed.<sup>105</sup> The final phase ‘Self-Sustainable Programs’ prepares the boy for reintegration into his community.

### *Management*

Balay Pasilungan is directed by FREELAVA executive officers, members and trustees. They pay periodic inspections and may arrive unannounced at any time. Shelter staffing consists of the centre Director, a social worker, a guidance counsellor, a jail coordinator, a reintegration officer, three house-parents, a house guard, the cook and four volunteers.<sup>106</sup> They work in liaison with the courts, the BJMP, the DSWD, the Public Attorney’s Office, jail social workers, local government officials, the Cebu City Task Force on Street Children, other NGOs, Saint Theresa’s College and Don Bosco Technical School.<sup>107</sup>

### *Client admission*

At the time of my visit there were 28 residents.<sup>108</sup> Admission criteria had gradually

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<sup>104</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>105</sup> *Justice for Children: Detention as a Last Resort* (Bangkok: UNICEF, 2003) 91.

<sup>106</sup> FREELAVA Power Point Presentation, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>107</sup> FREELAVA Power Point Presentation, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>108</sup> Field notes, 20/2/2008.



changed<sup>109</sup> because, under RA9344, every child has the right to be offered a diversion programme,<sup>110</sup> but it remained a centre for boys, aged around 13-15, referred to the centre by courts or social workers.

### *Accommodation*

Balay Pasilungan had an attractive frontage on to the city street. The timber entrance porch was freshly painted and displayed pot-plants like a welcoming family home. Behind this a spacious reception area gave onto an exterior courtyard and staircase.<sup>111</sup> Resident boys were delighted to welcome visitors; two English speakers volunteered to show us the premises. The boys ate lunch at tables in the courtyard, adjacent to which was a basic kitchen, a locker room, bathrooms and laundry facilities. One boy proudly displayed his neatly folded clothes inside his locker. Upstairs a spacious landing adjoined a large, clean and light dorm that contained single wooden beds.<sup>112</sup>

#### ***b) The programme***

Balay Pasilungan provides ‘a continuing rehabilitation programme’ as youth offenders ‘get back to normal life through various child/youth development activities’ before they

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<sup>109</sup> The original admission criteria were: Male, below 18 years old; First Offender; CICL Released from Jail Confinement; Referred by the Court or Social Worker; CICL under Diversion Programme; Children at Risk. Sourced from FREELAVA Power Point Presentation, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>111</sup> Field notes 20/2/2008 and photographs, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>112</sup> Field notes 20/2/2008 and photographs, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

re-enter mainstream society.’<sup>113</sup> The programme includes counselling, medical testing and management, sports, drug education and enrolment in school and training in skills such as photography, silkscreen printing, furniture and house painting, cooking, sewing, refrigeration, car mechanics and electronics.<sup>114</sup>

### *Structure of the day*

The leaders try to keep life simple and provide the same type of food as boys might have at home, but they often have to train them to sit at a table and to use cutlery. Boys learn to live as part of a family, taking a share of the cooking, laundry and scrubbing (nowadays there is greater expectation that boys as well as girls undertake these tasks in a family).<sup>115</sup> Boys related, ‘I learned how to cook and to clean’<sup>116</sup> or ‘I learnt cleanliness’ (personal hygiene). Others commented: ‘I made friends in this place’ and ‘They treat us just like their own children, to respect others and how to stand on our own.’<sup>117</sup>

### *Case management*

By means of its ‘Child-victim Community Forum’, FREELAVA tries to bring offenders and victims together, aiming to resolve cases permanently using ‘restorative justice

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<sup>113</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>114</sup> *Justice for Children: Detention as a Last Resort* (Bangkok: UNICEF, 2003), 91.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

processes'.<sup>118</sup> This is not easy as 'there are ingrained attitudes'.<sup>119</sup> 'It is easier to reconcile if the victim is assured that the boy is repentant, has paid damages, is changing his behaviour and will not offend again. It may be possible to resolve cases of petty theft, but reconciliation is less likely in cases of rape, robbery or murder.'<sup>120</sup>

### *Spiritual enhancement*

Local church groups come to hold activities with the boys. A boy explained to me that the 'good things' he gained from living at Balay Pasilungan included 'values, respect to others, praying the rosary, they teach us to pray, the lifestyle they teach us, how to be humble, to love even those who are not relatives, and I also learned how to pray to God.'<sup>121</sup> The programme incorporates 'spiritual activities based on local traditions in order for the clients to learn some positive values and appreciate the value of life.'<sup>122</sup>

### *Education and training*

Most boys are enrolled in public schools, which houseparents visit frequently to ensure that boys attend and to liaise with teachers.<sup>123</sup> There were problems at first because schools did not co-operate when they learnt that the boys had come from jails. As they

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<sup>118</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008. For one session, fifteen victims were invited, but only five were ready to face the offenders, with parents and social workers present to ensure safety, and of these five, just one was able to reconcile.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>122</sup> *Justice for Children: Detention as a Last Resort* (Bangkok: UNICEF, 2003), 91.

<sup>123</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

are often behind with their schooling, big boys are put into lower grades in Elementary classes and parents are afraid for their small children. ‘The boys find difficulties in adjusting and it’s hard for the teachers to deal with another category of children in the classroom.’<sup>124</sup> FREELAVA members talked to the schools about the law, the rights of the child and the right to a child-friendly school for all children, including CICL.<sup>125</sup>

The first boys enrolled in school proudly displayed their uniforms, but they found they were conspicuous as coming from Balay-Pasilungan and suffered for it, so they asked to dress the same as everyone else.<sup>126</sup> The boys seemed appreciative of the chance to go to school: ‘One very good thing that happened to me here was my education.’<sup>127</sup> If it is not possible for a boy to attend public school, a tutor comes to the shelter. An ALS teacher also attends and Manpower Training<sup>128</sup> is available outside the centre.

### *Recreational activities*

Boys enjoy playing sports and games, although during the week their time seemed to be mostly taken up with schooling, homework and domestic chores, as would be normal for most school children in the Philippines.

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<sup>124</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>127</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>128</sup> A government-sponsored vocational training programme.

### *Discipline*

On the streets, many boys become members of gangs or fraternities. When they arrive at Balay Pasilungan, staff members determine which gang boys belong to and ensure there are no problems with rivals or boys who have met previously. In the shelter they try to discourage the hierarchical gang culture, but it is not easy.<sup>129</sup> Asked what they miss, from outside, boys volunteered: ‘mallng’ (visiting shopping malls), smoking and video games.

The shelter is an open facility and boys can easily see their families, with permission from staff members, who facilitate their visits. If a boy leaves without permission, officers have a responsibility to report it to the court immediately. Usually, if a boy absconds, he returns after two or three days, sometimes ‘high on drugs’.<sup>130</sup> If a boy breaks the rules, staff members talk to both the child and his parents: ‘if a child is not responding to the programme, it is our problem.’<sup>131</sup> Their view is that the ‘rehabilitation programme is an integral part of growing up.’<sup>132</sup>

### ***c) Reintegration***

Parents are encouraged to visit their son, daily if they wish: the aim is always

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<sup>129</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>130</sup> When FREELAVA first set up this house, people in the neighbourhood were furious and made many negative comments. FREELAVA invited them to a party to talk with the children and staff members. They have now built up a good relationship. Neighbours report incidents and they invite boys to join in community activities. Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

reintegration into his home. Preparation for this is intensified during the last two months of his stay. The preferred action is to return the child to his family, if at all possible, but it depends on the social assessment.<sup>133</sup> If there is not an acceptable home for the boy, he is referred to SOS<sup>134</sup> or another long-term facility for care, support and training. There is no fostering scheme for CICL.<sup>135</sup> Often boys do not want to go home and they request an extension to stay until they finish studying or graduate from school. Some leavers are enrolled in the FREELAVA 'Independent Living Programme', which grants small short-term loans to set up self-supporting businesses.

Officers continue to call or write to boys after they have left. In a few months, they may have difficulties, such as being unable to afford school attendance, and need support. Sometimes a boy is re-admitted, even if he is, then, over 18; otherwise, it would be 'a waste of FREELAVA investment'.<sup>136</sup> Sometimes 'reintegrated kids' are found in jail again: five were currently back in Balay Pasilungan.

'Success stories' included a boy who previously had a series of robbery cases becoming a police officer, another promoted to supervisor in a shipbuilding company in Singapore, one working as a shop cashier and one graduated in culinary arts expecting to work in a

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<sup>133</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>134</sup> SOS Children is a large charity that works in the Philippines and internationally. Information can be found at <http://www.soschildrensvillages.org.uk/sos-childrens-charity> accessed 16/12/2012.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008: 'Most foster parents take infants or abandoned children. A group tried it with some boys, but a couple of the foster homes exploited them, treating them as working house boys. It's hard to put a child as a stranger into a family.'

<sup>136</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

baker's shop when his court case had terminated. Convicted children are given a suspension of sentence until they are twenty-one, but FREELAVA can recommend the case to be terminated earlier and persuade the court to erase the child's criminal record, so that he can apply for a job.<sup>137</sup> Three more, two living in the centre and one at home, are studying Information Technology at college.

#### **4.2.3. PREDA Therapeutic Community**

##### **Introduction**

Because the work of PREDA with regard to CICL is complex and the duration and depth of the fieldwork was greater,<sup>138</sup> considerably more data was gathered than at other locations. An expanded format is used in this section to accommodate additional fields of investigation. Following a brief outline of the background, aims and objectives of the project, it describes the key components of PREDA's work with boys whom it rescues from prison and reintegrates into society by means of a structured rehabilitation programme and ongoing provision. This description is based on data obtained at the PREDA project in the Philippines, collected from interviews with staff members and boys, supplemented by unpublished internal documents, such as schedules and annual reports produced by PREDA, verified and reinforced from observation of the programme in practice.

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<sup>137</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>138</sup> It was the subject of a two-week intensive field study.

*a) The institution*

PREDA was established in 1974 by Shay Cullen, a Columban priest, as a drug rehabilitation centre.<sup>139</sup> Its wide-ranging programme<sup>140</sup> now incorporates five departments.<sup>141</sup> In 2006, seeing that government services had insufficient resources to establish diversion programmes or rehabilitation centres for young offenders as decreed in RA9344, PREDA set up the Therapeutic Community for CICL.

The Vision and Mission statements of the department are shown in Table 4.6. and its programme objectives are shown in Table 4.7.<sup>142</sup> These provide a good summary of the work of the CICL rehabilitation centre.

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<sup>139</sup> PREDA originally stood for Prevention Rehabilitation against Drug Abuse (PREDA). Later, when the scope of the work was extended, it was decided to keep the well-known acronym by renaming it the People's Recovery Empowerment and Development Assistance (PREDA) Foundation Inc.

<sup>140</sup> Employing more than 80 staff members.

<sup>141</sup> These include a centre for the rescue and healing of sexually abused girls and exploited women, extensive work with ethnic farmers and fair trade marketing, lobbying for the rights of indigenous people to own the title of mineral-rich land and advocacy and awareness-raising of other social issues and the CICL programme.

<sup>142</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vision, Mission and Objectives</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vision</b></p> <p>The vision of the PREDA Therapeutic Community is a just, free, peaceful and prosperous society that serves the common good, respects human rights, especially the rights of children in conflict with the law and children at risk. A society, built on faith and virtue and spiritual values, which overcomes poverty by a fair distribution of wealth, opportunity and resources.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mission</b></p> <p>The mission of the PREDA Therapeutic Center is to provide temporary residential care for and to protect the rights of children in conflict with the law and children at risk in Central Luzon and Metro Manila and to promote the children's welfare and enhance their opportunities for a happy life as a productive member of society.</p>

*Table 4.6. PREDA CICL Programme Vision and Mission*

<b>Program Objectives</b>
To provide temporary residential care to children in conflict with the law.
To protect the child from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to his development, including detention in adult jails.
To prioritize the best interests of the child in all actions concerning his care, custody, education and property.
To provide home life, dietary, medical, and social services to residents.
To provide special education services and vocational training to prepare residents for useful and economically self-sufficient lives.
To provide counseling and therapies to aid value formation and to help inculcate respect for human rights and social justice in both the child and their families.
To provide the child with legal assistance for the duration of their case.
To provide the court with social data for the proper evaluation and disposition of cases of children under the Center's custody and to submit recommendations pertaining to their welfare and development.
To establish working relationships with the children's families, community agencies and other child-caring institutions to facilitate referrals for rehabilitation and thereby promote the use of diversion programs and also to facilitate the child's reintegration and reconciliation.
To evaluate existing policies, procedures, programs, services, and projects of the center and strive for continuous improvement in the service provided.
To coordinate with the Research, Advocacy, Information and Networking (RAIN) Department of PREDA and aid in their efforts of advocating for government policy changes by making maximum use of the knowledge and experience gained by them.

*Table 4.7. PREDA CICL programme objectives*

### *Accommodation*

The PREDA Therapeutic Community is an open facility, sited on a hill overlooking Subic Bay in Olongapo City. At the time of my visit, a new centre comprising larger accommodation and farmland was under construction. This was also an open facility in a rural location, with greater indoor and outdoor space intended to enhance opportunities for education, training and leisure activities.<sup>143</sup>

### *Client admission*

The PREDA Jails Rescue team takes food, drink and electric fans for minors in prisons, and interviews boys (who often do not know why they are there), then follows up their cases with the appropriate departments to effect their release. PREDA centre takes boys released from prisons or referred to it by family court judges. By 2008, hundreds had already been through the rehabilitation programme and reintegrated with their families and communities.<sup>144</sup> Since RA9344, judges refer fewer children under 15 because they are exempt from criminal liability. However, these younger boys can be placed in intervention programmes and some DSWD officers refer them to PREDA, if the children have committed grave offences or are deemed to be at high risk of progressing from petty crimes to serious offences. As the law prohibits the imprisonment of children, but there is a shortage of RRCY, more children are released directly to PREDA.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> For recent developments see <http://www.preda.org/en/projects/saving-children-in-jails/> accessed 9/1/2013

<sup>144</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>145</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

When children revealed experiences of abuse whilst in official police custody, PREDA officers began to visit police detention centres, where they found an increasing number of minors held under investigation in harsh conditions.<sup>146</sup> Relatively few referrals come from police or law enforcement officers, despite the fact that RA9344 confers considerable authority and responsibility on them. Since they generally have initial contact with accused children, their knowledge or ignorance of the law can have serious consequences. Often government officials lack the necessary resources to implement the law and so hold boys in prison because they have no other place to take them.<sup>147</sup> RA9344 requires them to submit children below the age of 15 years to social services within eight hours, without conducting an investigation. If a government social worker cannot come soon enough, Metro-Manila police officers may call PREDA.<sup>148</sup>

Most boys resident at PREDA during my visit were ‘released on recognizance’, that is transferred from prison by means of a court order for a period of rehabilitation. A minority were referred by local social workers, by voluntary commitment, or by the police or other agencies or brought from police stations. About two thirds of boys admitted to the centre had outstanding legal cases against them for alleged offences. Most are crimes against property, such as robbery, theft, attempted robbery, car theft and highway robbery; others are crimes against the person, such as rape, murder or homicide. Some boys were arrested on suspicion of illegal drug use, unlawful possession

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<sup>146</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>147</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 22/2/2008.

<sup>148</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

of illegal weapons, firearms, ammunition or explosives, others for public transport violations, trespass or resistance and disobedience to people in authority.<sup>149</sup> Most residents stay willingly, but it is explained that if a boy absconds, PREDA is legally accountable to the court and must report it.

### ***b) The programme***

#### *Structure of the day*

On weekdays, out-of-school boys receive appropriate education, followed by outdoor or indoor games (except when an outing is planned to a riverside for laundry, a picnic lunch and swimming). Lunch is followed by siesta, then a group dynamics lesson or special group session and gardening. Every evening, staff members lead a Bible-sharing, reflection and feedback session. After supper, there is a family meeting or primal therapy session or an opportunity for music or dance lessons, with television viewing allowed on Fridays. On Saturdays, there is generally a recreational outing or another special activity and, on Sunday, Mass and Catechism and an afternoon river outing. Boys at school all day join the same programme in the evenings and weekends, but have a homework period or tutorial on weekday evenings.

Examination of the data identified that the major aspects of the PREDA rehabilitation programme for CICL have regard to

#### ***i) Legal assistance***

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<sup>149</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

- ii) Physical health
- iii) Therapy
- iv) Spiritual enhancement and values formation
- v) Education and training
- vi) Recreational activities
- vii) Family reconciliation
- viii) Advocacy and awareness of rights

In practice, these programme components are not discrete, but overlap and intertwine as they inevitably would in any institution, or indeed in the life of a family or an individual. These eight aspects are examined in this subsection.

i) Legal assistance

Minors charged with offences need legal assistance to ensure their rights are protected during every stage of the judicial process and to avoid further trauma during the legal proceedings. Administrative aid includes recording and filing court documents, submitting reports, obtaining birth certificates, correspondence with court personnel and payment of drug test fees. Authenticated birth certificates prove whether boys are legally minors or adults, or children below fifteen years, at the time of the alleged offence. PREDA officers take boys to court hearings, attend legal case conferences, co-ordinate with the court offices and make every effort to have cases dismissed or resolved with minimum penalty, in order to offer boys opportunities for rehabilitation.

The employment of restorative justice in the Philippines has been reinforced by

RA9344.<sup>150</sup> When attending a court hearing, PREDA social workers try to set up a meeting to discuss the case. Whenever possible, they write and talk with complainants and appeal to their sense of compassion and justice; they try to reconcile the child with the victim and arrange an amicable out-of-court settlement.<sup>151</sup> In cases of petty theft, this can usually be achieved by persuasion that the child has suffered enough and is already undergoing rehabilitation but, in serious cases, such as murder or rape, it is hard for victims to meet with the offender and the outcome must be decreed in court.

Cases may be dismissed due to insufficient evidence, complainants withdrawing or repeatedly failing to attend court hearings, or successful reconciliation. Dismissal is sometimes effected with positive progress reports regarding the boy's current behaviour, prepared by the psychotherapist and submitted to the court and the complainants. 84% of decided cases result in dismissal or acquittal. Thus, many boys who experience abuse and torture in police detention centres or jails (and are often held for longer than the imposable penalty if found guilty) are never convicted.<sup>152</sup> If convicted, sentences are normally suspended and the boys stay with PREDA until their cases are finally dismissed.

## ii) Physical health

Since physical health is an integral part of total development, a medical officer and a

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<sup>150</sup> RA9344 (2006) Chapter 1, Section 2f); Chapter 1, Section 4q); Chapter 2, Section 5j).

<sup>151</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>152</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

nurse are employed to maintain children's health and address their medical and dental needs. PREDA links with the local hospital and clinics for treatment and assistance in health and hygiene education. Staff members receive training in first-aid and health care regarding common problems so that they can respond appropriately to minor complaints. Detailed records are kept of each boy's previous and continuing health and medical history. If in need of special attention, the child is taken to a hospital, clinic or dentist for further examination, x-ray or laboratory tests.

Imprisoned children frequently suffer malnutrition and disease from inadequate or contaminated food and the consequences of overcrowded conditions and violence. Common ailments include tuberculosis and other lung diseases, skin conditions (such as scabies, ringworm, boils or abscesses), toothache, broken bones from accidents or fights, and sexually transmitted diseases, such as gonorrhoea, contracted from sexual activity on the streets or in jail.<sup>153</sup>

Since poor children generally have no vaccinations against tuberculosis and hepatitis, PREDA has set procedures to diagnose, cure, prevent and control such diseases, in liaison with the city clinic. Any boy with a communicable disease is temporarily isolated to prevent the spread of infection. When someone is ill, but not infectious, other boys may support and assist the staff in monitoring and caring for him; this is seen as good training for them. In cases of serious illness or emergency, boys are taken to a nearby clinic or hospital by a staff member, who records instructions regarding ongoing

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<sup>153</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

treatment to keep all staff informed. If hospitalised, boys are visited regularly.

### *Health education and awareness*

The daily schedule starts at 5.30 a.m. with bed-making, cleaning dormitories, physical tasks such as gardening or farm duties (for those not attending school), breakfast, group duties, bathing and daily hygiene. It ends with more bathing and hygiene before bedtime. Boys are given personal care items, such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, a toothbrush, a comb and laundry soap and taught about the importance of cleanliness, such as washing hands before meals and brushing their teeth. They are required to keep themselves neat and tidy and to acquire good hygiene habits. Where necessary, they are taught sanitary hygiene, how to bath, shower, wash their hair, use deodorants, brush their teeth, cut their nails and other personal hygiene routines.

Boys are given regular haircuts and shown how to wash their linen, clean the house and wash dishes. They undertake their own laundry, usually during an outing to wash clothes in the river, to conserve water. At mealtimes, staff members teach good table manners, reminding boys how to eat properly, to sit down until finished and to use cutlery.

Health topics are addressed in group sessions or training, using lectures, games, and quizzes to make them interesting and easy to understand. Health education includes teaching how to prevent, minimise and deal with skin problems and age-appropriate sex education. Boys learn about the harmful effects of smoking tobacco and sniffing



rugby<sup>154</sup> and the importance of fresh air and exercise.

### *Nutrition*

Planned menus promote a well-balanced diet comprising three meals and two snacks each day. The Medical Officer checks menus to regulate hot pepper and ensure a balance of nutritious foods, such as organic rice, vegetables, fish, meat and desserts. Boys often experience foods they have never known before. Meals are prepared by the cook, assisted by some boys, who are taught to keep the kitchen and cooking utensils clean and hygienic. The boys appeared well fed and when one boy visited his home, his parents were surprised how healthy he looked: in three months, he had gained weight and his skin condition had improved.<sup>155</sup>

### iii) Therapy

Therapy is based on the view that CICL are victims of life circumstances and unsuitable environments, rather than offenders deserving punishment. Most come from dysfunctional families, where parents are separated or one has died, and economic conditions are poor, the adults being unemployed or earning a pittance as street vendors. Boys have commonly suffered violence at home or on the streets, been involved in stealing, sniffing rugby or other drug habits and endured imprisonment. Consequently, they need therapy to enable them to cope with their past and to experience healing and recovery from their emotional wounds, so that they can enjoy the childhood that PREDA

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<sup>154</sup> See 1.2.1.

<sup>155</sup> Interview with member of staff, PREDA, 11/02/2008.

believes everyone deserves.<sup>156</sup>

1. ‘Deprogramming’ and helping boys to adjust to the community life in the centre, involving intensive psychotherapy and a personal development programme, leading to greater self-awareness.	2. Inculcating healthy attitudes and practices, attained through the creation of positive personal relationships and a renewal of faith.
3. Practical application of the boy’s growth that may involve leadership training, as well as enrolment in school or employment.	4. After-care and follow-up, aiming to maintain and further enhance the boy’s growth.

*Table 4.8. PREDA’s four-level therapeutic system*

The therapeutic system, based on four successive levels, as shown in Table 4.8., underlies both the activities at the centre and the intervention work of a professional therapist.<sup>157</sup> The therapeutic benefits of regular personal care and attention are inherent in all aspects of the programme and everyone participates in activities designed to ‘inject different values’ to modify behaviour.<sup>158</sup> The ‘therapeutic environment’ is designed to teach ‘respect, forgiveness and justice’ and to ‘foster dignity and self-esteem, confidence and participation’.<sup>159</sup> Forms of direct intervention, described in this section, take place against the background of establishing a way of life in which no violence or corporal

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<sup>156</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>157</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>158</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>159</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

punishment is permitted and conflicts are resolved in a just and transparent manner.<sup>160</sup>

### *Individual treatment plan*

Each boy is given a psychological evaluation on admittance and a year later, to assess his mental health and emotional state and decide appropriate action. Occasionally, this entails referral to an external resource, but normally therapeutic intervention is decided by the PREDA psychotherapist and implemented in the centre. Based on a boy's initial assessment and reports regarding his personal, family and community problems and his alleged offence, an individual treatment plan is devised. Emotional and psychological support and healing is offered by means of primal or feeling therapy, individual and group counselling, art therapy and personal development training.<sup>161</sup> Information from weekly behaviour reports is used to adjust individual treatment plans.

### *Primal therapy*

If a child suffers the trauma of abuse, exploitation or imprisonment without opportunities to express his emotional pain, or if he is ignored or punished for expressing it, he is likely to repress his feelings. Attempting to handle traumatic situations in this way may develop into a pattern that is harmful to his development. Repressed memories may grow into a 'pool of primal pain', causing a build-up of tension and anxiety, which results in a 'split in consciousness': the reality of pain is pushed on to one level, but the daily reality with the presence of tension is on another.

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<sup>160</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>161</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

This often leads to psychosomatic disorders, such as withdrawal, distrust, over-dependence, substance abuse, depression or aggression. Such ‘coping strategies’ can generate further problems until a situation arises that a boy cannot handle effectively, his pain resurfaces and the inability to deal with it causes acute anxiety.<sup>162</sup>

Primal therapy is a form of psychotherapy designed to address the effects of emotional trauma by bringing repressed pain into consciousness. It ‘looks beyond the coping strategies and tackles the underlying pain.’<sup>163</sup> In rehabilitation, it is used to encourage a boy to express his pain safely and truly experience it, so that he can then ‘seek to redress the imbalance’ in his life. In a safe environment with a qualified facilitator, he can express his feelings as he wishes (such as, scream, shout, cry or punch things) until he accesses the ‘pool of pain’ and ‘a flood of memories and tears follows’.

During the session, children are free to release any emotion they feel, be it anger, guilt, fear or joy. For this to be therapeutic, it must be done in ‘an atmosphere of acceptance, trust, honesty and love’. Staff members report that, when boys release their ‘long-buried anger and hostility, pain and hurt’ they ‘become more enlightened and less prone to crime and violence’ and discover new ‘self-esteem and dignity’.<sup>164</sup> They are ‘supported and encouraged to renew their lives’ as their ‘pent-up anger and negative emotions’ are

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<sup>162</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA. 2008. This summary relies upon a basic explanation of primal therapy theory as documented by PREDA.

<sup>163</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>164</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

‘replaced by feelings of self-worth and acceptance and confidence’.<sup>165</sup>

Significant ground work must be undertaken to ensure that a boy is capable of beginning such therapy. If he feels unable to face the trauma of confronting his memories, alternative therapeutic methods are used. Recovery is also ‘contingent on other interventions, such as family reconciliation, occupational therapy, moral value reorientation and character-building.’<sup>166</sup>

### *Counselling*

Individual counselling draws upon information from social worker reports on each boy’s strengths and weaknesses. Staff members are also available for ‘drop in’ and spontaneous counselling. Counselling sessions in groups related to alleged offences has proved helpful, using customised modules to target topics such as stealing, addiction or sexual offences. Boys discuss crime as a family and society problem, discovering they are not alone in their experiences.

Commonly, a guilty child denies accusations due to fear of the consequences. The facilitator encourages him to talk about the case and decide whether to admit liability. He may need to accept the reality that he committed the offence and eventually to show remorse, realising that what he did was wrong, that someone was affected by his action and that he has caused suffering to himself, his family and others in his community.

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<sup>165</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>166</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

Following this acknowledgement, his burden of guilt can be released in primal therapy sessions.

*Building relationships and resolving conflict*

Daily 'group dynamics' sessions are more structured than primal therapy and address social interactions and daily experiences. Games and activities may be used to empower boys by involving them in problem-solving activities and to develop more group understanding. Facilitators aim to teach boys how to interrelate and co-operate and explain that the consequences of fighting are to feel bad with each other.<sup>167</sup> Staff members 'try to be nice and humble, down-to-earth with the boys, to like them and enjoy their company, to be like them and be their friends, so they can express their problems and feelings to them.'<sup>168</sup> They show them respect and friendship.

Regular intervention therapy reduces tension and incidents of violence, but any such instances are dealt with carefully. A project officer talks with each individually, listening as he explains his side in full and expresses his pain. Having heard both sides, the officer may point out the inconsistencies in their stories and encourage them to admit their mistakes and apologise, explaining the need for sincerity and accountability for their actions.<sup>169</sup> He may bring the issue for discussion in a feedback session, talking about behaviour and using psychology. If the matter cannot be resolved, it is reported to the

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<sup>167</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>168</sup> Interview with a staff member. PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>169</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 12/2007.

psychologist for further treatment.

### *Prevention of bullying*

Efforts are made to prevent any bullying of new boys by established residents. In jail, inmates affiliate themselves with gangs and newcomers at PREDA may be from rival gangs. Boys tend to be closer to those from their home area and to fight with groups from other areas. Some may try to advise new boys: 'You stay with us and keep away from them.'<sup>170</sup> Boys must realise that they are no longer in jail, that PREDA exists to respect everyone's rights, so they must not infringe the rights of others. Their manifest aggression has an underlying reason that can be addressed by primal therapy. Staff members prepare the boys for newcomers during the feedback session and incidents of bullying are minimal now that long-stay clients have internalised the PREDA ethos.<sup>171</sup>

Some boys have been sexually abused in jail or by foreigners and must understand that such behaviour is never permitted at the PREDA centre.<sup>172</sup> Serious matters are dealt with by the Director. He talks to any boys involved, issues warnings and counsels them.

### *Family meetings*

Family meeting for all boys is held weekly with the Director, Project Co-ordinator and all project officers. Incidents of conflict and other issues are discussed and used as

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<sup>170</sup> Interview with a staff member. PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>171</sup> Interview with a staff member. PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>172</sup> Interview with a staff member. PREDA, 8/2/2008.

opportunities to teach important values. Set routines and peer pressure are helpful in changing behaviour and attitudes, but it can be hard for boys to adjust to a place where everything is ordered and scheduled; it takes some almost a year to follow the routine and schedule.<sup>173</sup>

iv) *Spiritual enhancement and values formation*

PREDAs viewpoint is that boys referred to the centre are victims of the environment into which they have been born. Their lives have been influenced by poverty and corruption, the ‘loss of spiritual values in family life’, the ‘proliferation of vice and drug abuse’ and the violence and ‘moral degradation’ of the society in which they were reared.<sup>174</sup> Neglect and abuse from adults makes them vulnerable to peer group pressure and these factors combine to create a situation where they come into conflict with the law and authorities. It is considered to be ‘primarily for lack of strong moral principles and character, or understanding of their inherent self-worth and dignity, that many boys have committed offences’, generally due to having no caring adults to give them ‘guidance, counselling and moral support’.<sup>175</sup>

The rehabilitation programme is based on the belief that the children are innately good, ‘created in the image and likeness of God’, not in ‘the image that they manifest of the

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<sup>173</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>174</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>175</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.



corruption and criminality of their former environment.<sup>176</sup> PREDA aims to recognise their inherent virtue and to provide them with a positive environment ‘to instil respect for their self-worth and dignity’ and to ‘develop their self-esteem and confidence’.<sup>177</sup> The family life style is designed to deliver ‘affirmation, understanding, positive reinforcement, spiritual values and formation education’, in order to give each child a ‘sense of belonging and being wanted and valued’. The aim is for each boy to recover spiritually, to ‘form strong values’, develop ‘self-dignity’ and learn ‘to respect himself and others and their property’ and the environment.<sup>178</sup> Staff members pay attention to their daily interaction with the boys. They are trained to respect the dignity of each child and know how to react if one becomes violent or rude: they must not counter violence with aggression. No form of abuse is allowed. If workers cannot cope in a situation, they leave it to someone who can. They are taught that CICL are victims, too.<sup>179</sup>

### *Spiritual and values formation activities*

The programme of values formation and character-building activities is designed to help boys to build their self-esteem and confidence and to develop strong spiritual values and character so that they are able to resist temptation and not return to a life of petty crime.<sup>180</sup> This programme deliberately integrates religious, spiritual, personal

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<sup>176</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>177</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>178</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>179</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 1/2/2008.

<sup>180</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2007.

development and values education by means of:

- Praying together in the mornings and saying grace before and after meals.
- Gathering daily to read a passage from the Bible and reflect about its significance in their daily lives.
- Reciting a 'Pledge of Renewal', which the boys formulated. If a boy, or his family, is not Catholic, that is respected. He is asked whether he wants to attend Mass and 'hear the word of God', but he is expected to participate in Bible sharing and family meeting, which also addresses practical issues of community life.
- Celebrating Mass, most Sunday mornings. Leaders emphasise 'the Christian values of human dignity and respect for self and others and the importance of repentance and accepting penance.'<sup>181</sup> Generally, new residents know nothing about Mass; eventually they start to memorise it and to understand. Boys are asked if they have celebrated their first Holy Communion and told that they must first go to a priest for confession.<sup>182</sup>
- Receiving religious instruction from Columban catechists and participating in Lenten activities (procession, Visita Iglesia and watching films). Boys attend fortnightly spiritual formation seminars and periodic spiritual retreats, conducted by resource speakers and project officers.

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<sup>181</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>182</sup> A child normally participates in these Catholic church sacraments when about 8 years old.

From the Bible stories, boys begin to appreciate Christian values:

The values set by Christ in the Gospels are useful in making boys realise this is the right thing to do and it makes it easier to talk about modifying their behaviour. Staff members are not just speaking of their own experience, but know it is based on the life of Christ. It is good for the boys to believe in something: to do good deeds not just for other people but for themselves.<sup>183</sup>

### *Faith development*

Personal development and spirituality are important components of the recovery programme. This 'psycho-spiritual approach',<sup>184</sup> requires resilience and patience on behalf of teachers. After abuse and neglect, 'many children are understandably sceptical about the existence of God, particularly a benevolent one.'<sup>185</sup> A spiritual teacher facilitates discussions around values and moral issues until, through intensive work, 'their faith is reconfirmed'.<sup>186</sup> 'The psycho-spiritual technique helps them to discover their inner selves and enhance spirituality for possible enrichment of virtues.'<sup>187</sup>

'Through art work and other practical applications, the children begin to understand the role spirituality plays in their lives' and 'gradually develop self-control, discipline and

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<sup>183</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>184</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>185</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>186</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>187</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

self-competence.<sup>188</sup> It helps the children to come to terms with their abuse: ‘in some cases, the children have even learned to forgive their abusers.’<sup>189</sup>

### *Routine and discipline*

Since many factors in a child’s past contributed to his coming into conflict with the law, rehabilitation entails lifestyle changes as well as attitude and behaviour modification. This may be his first experience of sleeping in a bed (rather than on the floor or in the street) of having regular showers, sweeping the floor, washing pots, or cleaning outside areas. Boys learn about routine: to get up on time, to schedule their day, self-discipline, how to manage their time.

Some boys are given work and receive incentive payments. Those working in the new site construction were expected to buy their own personal needs. Boys are advised to save some money to give to their parents or to buy gifts for their siblings on home visits, but they also have a weekly outing to the market or shopping mall.

### v) Education and training

Although education is seen by many Filipinos as a means of escaping from poverty, in many families of low socio-economic status little is left, after providing food and housing, for children’s education or medical expenses.<sup>190</sup> School attendance is

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<sup>188</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>189</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>190</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

compulsory and free, but hidden costs result in many children failing to finish elementary level and even fewer manage to complete high school.<sup>191</sup> Most CICL boys belong to very poor families in urban slums and have dropped out of school at an early age. Education is also interrupted by arrest and incarceration. Since the effects of traumatic experience and the therapeutic interventions necessary for rehabilitation can significantly disrupt schooling, PREDA assists those attending school and encourages those not in school to return to education.

New residents are given a comprehensive educational assessment, but are not encouraged to re-enter formal education immediately, as many have difficulty working in a structured environment. Out-of-school youths participate in daily ALS, while they adjust to their new environment and take initial steps towards rehabilitation. They receive non-formal instruction, which aims to make them functionally literate and ready for formal education. Each is assigned to the appropriate ALS level according to his ability: Basic Literacy, Elementary Level or Secondary Level. Department of Education modules are used, with teaching monitored and assisted by a peripatetic teacher, so that boys pass the relevant Accreditation and Equivalency test. These modules, which employ an integrated approach to learning, incorporate various subjects, including values training, specifically aimed at aiding reintegration into the community. Further training seminars on various topics are offered by departments of PREDA.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008. For related statistics, see 1.2.2.

<sup>192</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

When appropriate, following an evaluation of their academic history and performance at the centre, boys are enrolled in local, public elementary or high schools. PREDA provides teaching materials and books for children to study in school and during the holidays.<sup>193</sup> Staff members visit schools to monitor students' attendance, liaise with personnel and attend parent-teacher meetings. They hold evening tutorial sessions for students who need help with school work, prepare boys with little or no schooling for the PEPT<sup>194</sup> and facilitate taking the annual Accreditation and Equivalency test. About 70% of boys enrolled in school receive pass marks in all subjects and, at the end of the year, qualify to proceed to the next grade.<sup>195</sup> Basic computer lessons are provided for boys at High School level. Selected residents, whether at school or out-of-school, complete at least one training course in handicrafts, sewing or welding.

vi) Recreational activities

Recreation is integrated into the recovery programme for therapeutic reasons. Artistic pursuits are seen to provide 'an effective medium for expression that taps their creativity'.<sup>196</sup> Indoor activities include reading, physical exercise routines, table tennis, drama, chess and other board games. Sometimes, boys watch a television programme or DVD film, which is carefully selected for positive benefit. Leisure time is spent in playing basketball or other outside activities, such as playing games, talking, reading,

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<sup>193</sup> Public schools provide books for use during term time only and will not release a child's grade until all books have been returned.

<sup>194</sup> Philippine Educational Placement Test.

<sup>195</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>196</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

and relaxing on the ‘viewing deck’.

A monthly celebration ensures that boys with birthdays feel important, remembered and valued. Those with talent and interest participate in theatre, dance or puppetry workshops and can join a youth band, a choir and a dance group. Once a month, boys who have exhibited good behaviour or a positive change are taken to a movie or stage play. Recreational activities also provide children with happy memories and ‘develop their camaraderie, sportsmanship and teamwork’.<sup>197</sup>

Shopping trips and outings, during which boys come into genuine contact with members of the public, counteract risks of institutionalisation. Outings afford further opportunities for physical exercise, such as swimming, running, team games and sports, often at the beach or a park, where boys swim, play basketball, volleyball and soccer, sing songs and play traditional Filipino games.

Less frequent events, often held in conjunction with other local NGOs, include sports, arts and summer camps, a variety of cultural presentations, creative workshops and fun games. Educational field trips are organised twice a year. During a three-day Summer Skills Camp, all the boys were introduced to skills such as sandal-making, plastic bottle and newspaper recycling, silk screen printing and puppet presentation. At a Summer Art Camp, participants learnt traditional Filipino dances and played ethnic Filipino musical

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<sup>197</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.

instruments.<sup>198</sup> The boys participate in Sports Fest,<sup>199</sup> together with residents of the PREDA centre for girls and members of AKBAY,<sup>200</sup> so the group cannot be stigmatised by others for being CICL. Participation in these events is also intended to engender socially acceptable behaviour in preparation for reintegration into society.

vii) Family reconciliation

*Maintaining links*

Family reconciliation is a vital aspect of PREDA's programme as it aims to 'reconcile and reintegrate' boys with their families and communities, to live in freedom, but not continue 'a life of petty crime and violence' and ultimately become responsible members of society.<sup>201</sup> Experience has shown that 'sustained support and interest by the parents or guardians in the child's well-being is an essential factor in successful reintegration.'<sup>202</sup> Thus, efforts are made to ensure that boys placed with PREDA, at a distance from their homes, keep in touch with and bond with their parents and siblings. The project establishes links and builds positive relationships with families. Parents are encouraged and assisted to attend court hearings, so that they can follow their child's progress.

Believing that the family is the basic unit of society and normally the best place for a

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<sup>198</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.

<sup>199</sup> Sports Fest is an annual inter-agency sports competition organised as part of the celebration of 'children's month', commemorated each October.

<sup>200</sup> See 4.2.3.b) viii).

<sup>201</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.

<sup>202</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.



child, project officers work towards family reconciliation and, if possible and desirable, eventual return to the family home. Since institutionalisation can hinder reintegration into the community, boys are enabled to visit their families once a month and to stay for a few days during holidays, special occasions, and other times if appropriate and the court permits, to improve communication between them and strengthen relationships. Feedback reports about home visits are added to boys' files.<sup>203</sup>

### *Family therapy and teaching*

Families are encouraged to visit the centre and to undertake family therapy in order to develop parents' ability to support and understand the needs of their children.<sup>204</sup> Often parents are estranged and a step-parent has his or her own family and is not supportive of the boy. If the family is too dysfunctional or is responsible for abuse of the child, guardians or other primary care-givers may substitute for parents.

Family therapy sessions can serve to empower boys and reduce their repressed anger and other negative emotions. The sessions help parents to appreciate their failure to take good care of their children and learn how to do better in the future.<sup>205</sup> Boys are given opportunities to express any anger and ill feelings towards their parents. If they do not feel able to do this, facilitators can convey the emotions expressed during counselling sessions and emotional release therapy. To prepare families for the eventual

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<sup>203</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.

<sup>204</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>205</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

reintegration of their children, they are invited for family meetings, case conferences and counselling and informed about their child's progress.

Parents and guardians are invited to attend quarterly three-day sessions at the PREDA centre. Each event includes awareness-building seminars, the themes of which have included effective parenting, livelihood issues and teaching about laws related to domestic violence against women and children. Staff members and visiting speakers teach parents, whilst educational activities are arranged for the boys' siblings. On the third day, everyone takes a trip to the beach, with the aim of helping families to bond and enjoy quality time together. Unfortunately, some families living in distant regions cannot attend meetings due to work or other commitments, or the expense may be prohibitive despite the assistance provided.

#### *Preparation for family life*

Three months before the boy is due to leave, individual counselling focuses on preparation for integration. To ease his life back in community, where there are no set schedules as in PREDA, social workers try to ensure immediate school attendance, with too little free time to return to old ways. He has to adjust to conditions, like not having regular meals, and realise that he must work and earn money to provide food. Often the family has not seen the child much or it may have problems adjusting to the boy's enhanced expectations. Boys go home for a week or two to practise, after which staff members discuss any problems with the family and child and advise what he can do when he returns to stay full-time.

### *Ongoing support*

Staff members appreciate the difficulties that boys face: 'Although boys learn a set of behavioural rules at the centre ... they foresee they will be back in their old setting, will be too poor to go to school or buy food, neighbours may take drugs or bully them and their relationship with their parents may be poor.'<sup>206</sup> 'Change might have come from within, but when back home it is hard to combat it [the lifestyle]. Transformation is more effective when parents are supportive or when the whole family moves to a different community.'<sup>207</sup> The quality of follow-up is vital. The PREDA social worker explains to the family that the boy has developed a positive attitude and needs support, then refers his case back to social workers in Manila. PREDA supports the boy's continuing education by funding school uniform and supplies, school projects, transportation, food and miscellaneous needs in order to ensure that the rehabilitation effort is not wasted.<sup>208</sup>

### *viii) Advocacy and awareness of rights*

Issues relating to imprisoned children have largely escaped public attention despite charters and laws created to protect their rights. Information is difficult to obtain because few visitors or journalists are allowed into the jails. However, PREDA workers have penetrated numerous prisons and rescued children, many of whom have been victims of

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<sup>206</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>207</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>208</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

severe abuse or have suffered violations of their rights during the judicial process.<sup>209</sup>

PREDA believes that positive action is needed to help such youngsters to speak out against the abuses they have suffered and for the rights of other children.<sup>210</sup>

### *Human rights education*

In general, Filipino children are not empowered to assert their rights or those of others in similar circumstances. In PREDA, boys learn about their rights as children and as human beings. Teaching is based upon legal statements about the rights of CICL, such as those from RA9344, the contents of which are simplified, explained and discussed.<sup>211</sup> Boys

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<sup>209</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>210</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>211</sup> RA9344 (2006) Chapter 2, Section 5. This lists their rights as:

- (a) the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- (b) the right not to be imposed a sentence of capital punishment or life imprisonment, without the possibility of release;
- (c) the right not to be deprived, unlawfully or arbitrarily, of his/her liberty; detention or imprisonment being a disposition of last resort, and which shall be for the shortest appropriate period of time;
- (d) the right to be treated with humanity and respect, for the inherent dignity of the person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of a person of his/her age. In particular, a child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adult offenders at all times. No child shall be detained together with adult offenders. He/She shall be conveyed separately to or from court. He/She shall await hearing of his/her own case in a separate holding area. A child in conflict with the law shall have the right to maintain contact with his/her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;
- (e) the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his/her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on such action;
- (f) the right to bail and recognizance, in appropriate cases;
- (g) the right to testify as a witness in his/her own behalf under the rule on examination of a child witness;
- (h) the right to have his/her privacy respected fully at all stages of the proceedings;
- (i) the right to diversion if he/she is qualified and voluntarily avails of the same;
- (j) the right to be imposed a judgment in proportion to the gravity of the offense where his/her best interest, the rights of the victim and the needs of society are all taken into consideration by the court, under the principle of restorative justice;
- (k) the right to have restrictions on his/her personal liberty limited to the minimum, and where discretion is given by law to the judge to determine whether to impose fine or imprisonment, the imposition of fine being preferred as the more appropriate penalty;
- (l) in general, the right to automatic suspension of sentence;
- (m) the right to probation as an alternative to imprisonment, if qualified under the Probation Law;

begin to understand that they have been victims of abuse, which they need not suffer, and that child imprisonment, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, are illegal. They learn that many young people have suffered similarly and that thousands are still in dire situations, but that appropriate action can be effective in bringing about change. At a Youth Camp aimed ‘to empower children by educating them about their rights and training them to become more effective leaders and advocates’, CICL boys joined other groups to participate in games, skills training and lectures on social and environmental issues and value formation.<sup>212</sup>

### *Social action*

Boys are taught and encouraged to speak out by taking part in relevant advocacy and awareness-raising activities, in order to ‘lobby the government to always consider the best interests of children and to implement child-friendly policies and laws.’<sup>213</sup> In 2000, child rights advocates, including PREDA, formed AKBAY,<sup>214</sup> an organisation to enable children to participate in issues such as the environment, child rights, women’s rights, socio-economic projects, education, culture and sports, child and youth participation and governance and preventive health education. It has apparently become ‘popular and

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- (n) the right to be free from liability for perjury, concealment or misrepresentation; and  
(o) other rights as provided for under existing laws, rules and regulations.’

Source: [http://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2006/ra\\_9344\\_2006.html](http://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2006/ra_9344_2006.html) accessed 30/03/2010.

<sup>212</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, accessed 2/2008.

<sup>213</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>214</sup> The Tagalog word ‘akbay’ means to put an arm around someone’s shoulder in a gesture of friendship, deep sympathy and wanting to help. It is also used here as an acronym for the words “Aksyon ng Kabataan at mga bata para sa Bayan”, which means ‘Children and youth Action for the Nation’.

socially accepted’, ‘officially recognised by the local government’ and ‘well known for its human rights advocacy’.<sup>215</sup> With AKBAY, boys participate in social and civic activities, such International Human Rights Day and relevant rallies. For example, they joined a motorcade, waving placards and banners about children’s rights and presented a show during the final programme.<sup>216</sup>

### *Child advocacy*

PREDA continues to fight against the ‘subhuman’<sup>217</sup> conditions of child imprisonment and for the release of illegally incarcerated children. Officers keep the authorities informed about juvenile justice issues and promote the therapeutic centre to those empowered to recommend referral, as a place ‘where the boys can reform, be educated, live in dignity and freedom and have another chance in life.’<sup>218</sup> The Human Rights Department trains local government officials, teachers and the police how to handle reports of child sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency and the PEPS<sup>219</sup> Department undertakes teaching about human rights to students at all levels.<sup>220</sup> Once empowered, abused children can be very effective in advocacy because they speak from personal experience.<sup>221</sup> With training, boys develop the ability to give media interviews, both

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<sup>215</sup> <http://www.preda.org/work/akbay/healthreso.html> accessed 30/03/2010.

<sup>216</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>217</sup> Shay Cullen et al. *kids behind bars*, 25.

<sup>218</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>219</sup> In this context PEPS stands for ‘Preventive Education and Public Speaking’.

<sup>220</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>221</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

local and international, and to contribute to seminars and workshops.<sup>222</sup> One hope is that, by speaking out ‘against violations of human and child rights’, the use of restorative justice and rehabilitation programmes will increase.<sup>223</sup>

### *Outreach*

Following training about poverty and inequality, with explanations of the activities, senior residents, with Project officers, carry out community service or outreach programmes to children and youth in nearby depressed communities. Some accompany PREDA staff to CRADLE or other jails or to find children living on the street; they talk to the boys, learn their ages and tell them about the PREDA centre.

### **Section summary**

This section examined the work of three NGOs concerned with the rehabilitation of CICL whilst keeping them in the community. Each works in a different setting and manner. Ahon sa Kalye runs a small group home in which youths have personal care and attention, but spend most of their time in the local community learning, working, and enjoying sports, social or church activities. Its strong Protestant Christian ethos underlies all its work. Balay Pasilungan is a larger home for younger boys who generally attend local schools, but live together in a rehabilitative community. It is run by FREELAVA volunteers with paid staff and has a strong ethos of juvenile justice and child rights,

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<sup>222</sup> Further evidence of the participation of the boys in campaigning for the rights of children was gained from looking at photo-documentation, video-clips and newspaper articles about relevant events.

<sup>223</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA.

underpinned by Catholicism. The PREDA Foundation therapeutic community has a comprehensive residential programme of rehabilitation with a clear view of the boys as victims of society and firm ideas about how to restore their hope and dignity. Its work is founded on Catholic Bible teaching and incorporates human rights action.

Section 4.3. explores the phase of spiritual awakening often experienced by boys, usually after they are rescued from prison and placed in a genuinely rehabilitative facility.

### **4.3. Awakening**

This section describes the phase of awakening experienced by some boys in prison and, more particularly, by boys who have been released from prison and placed in rehabilitation centres. It draws directly from data derived from interviews with individuals and groups to illustrate the nature of this awakening and the awareness of change as expressed by the boys. Their responses indicate that, when something in their lives precipitates a true realisation of their situation, a sense of *awakening* can bring about a desire to change. An examination of the data reveals that this state of awakening has many aspects that, whilst they may overlap, have been grouped here under five headings that reflect an analysis of the development of spiritual awakening in the adolescent boys: *Realisation*, *Recognition*, *Enlightenment*, *Reflection* and *Finding identity*.

#### ***a) Realisation***

The term *realisation* is employed here to signify the point at which someone realises that



his old way of life is not bringing him happiness and fulfilment and he no longer wants it. In chatting to some boys, it became apparent that they realised that they did not want to continue to live their adult lives as that they had found themselves living as young people. Danilo recounted this moment of clear realisation:

I have a friend who is already old, but he is still on the streets. I thought, 'Do I have to be on the streets all my life?' So I thought of changing and the Lord helped me. I was praying under the bridge and I told the Lord, 'I don't want this kind of life any more.' The next day the Lord answered my prayer and some Christians came to help me.<sup>224</sup>

This realisation may arise from physical deprivation, such as lack of food or dry shelter (hence living under the bridge). When these basic needs have been met, at least partially, and the boy receives some teaching, he may come to a further, less physical level of realisation, seeing that more is required of him, if he wants greater fulfilment in life. A boy in prison said that the priest had advised him 'when I go out, to be good and behave well.' When I asked him if this was important, he replied, 'Yes, because if you stay here you cannot do anything good with your life.'<sup>225</sup>

### ***b) Recognition***

*Recognition* is used here for the state of recognising essential differences in the new way of life that the boys currently experience and that, due to these differences, they now feel better than they did previously. As such, it is necessarily a state of mind attained only by

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<sup>224</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>225</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

boys whose experience of life has improved. There appear to be three levels in this phase of recognition. Initially, boys delight in finding that they are physically more comfortable because their basic needs for safety, food, shelter, clothing and cleanliness are being met for them.

The second level is more emotional as boys discover that they enjoy living ‘a normal life’ and a form of ‘family life’, which incorporates the unconditional love of parent figures, who guide and care for them. At this stage, with steady guidance, they also find that they are learning how to care for themselves.

At the third level, which has a more psychological aspect, boys report that they learn useful survival and vocational skills. Of significance here is evidence that they discern they have a genuine option to make use of these skills to extend their current way of life, which they find preferable to the old one, and make it a permanent feature of their future independent lives when they return to society. By this stage they appear easier in their minds, more contented and more fulfilled. In the rehabilitation centres, I observed that, in general, boys, who had come to the *realisation* that their former lives were not acceptable to them, were increasingly able to *recognise* the difference in the new life they were being offered. The three levels of this state of *recognition* are illustrated below.

#### *Level one*

At first, for newcomers, this recognition was typically based on the physical fulfilment of their basic needs, such as safe shelter and good, regular food. Asked ‘what happens at

this centre when boys first arrive?’ a boy replied, ‘At the welcome party we are given the rules and policies and good food.’<sup>226</sup> When I asked a group of residents in an NGO centre ‘What do you like about being here?’ a young boy responded simply: ‘Eating. Here we eat five times a day. Before, I had no food or not on time.’<sup>227</sup>

Boys in a RRCY recognised their good fortune in being provided with a more comfortable and pleasant life and responded to this with a sense of relief and gratitude. For example, Pedro, aged 18, volunteered ‘I am thankful I came here. Big thanks I came here because outside I could not take care of myself or have safety’, and Aaron, already aged 20, said ‘I feel comfortable here and have an easy life here. I feel so good.’

### *Level two*

Those who had been in the centre a little longer recognised important fundamental changes beyond the provision of their basic needs. Some mentioned the ‘opportunity to live a normal life.’ Many boys described this change in terms such as ‘My life is good now’<sup>228</sup> or ‘Here I learnt to live a normal life. I’m so happy they brought me here because I learned so much.’<sup>229</sup> Aaron expanded on this theme: ‘I have a happy life here and easy. I live a good life here and I eat good food. Mama and the carers are good. I

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<sup>226</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>227</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>228</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

learned to work, how to be good and how to work.<sup>230</sup> Jose, aged 15 years, came from a family with 14 children (whose parents had separated), all living on the streets where the only way to obtain food was to steal it.<sup>231</sup> He said simply, ‘Here I can sleep, eat, go to school for the first time.’<sup>232</sup>

Others spoke with enthusiasm about their new-found experience of living as a family. As Mario, who was 16 years old and had been at the centre for three months, told me: ‘I’m thankful because they take good care of us – Mama and the staff. They are so very good to us and don’t abandon us – because I didn’t grow up with my parents. Here I experienced how to be loved by parents.’<sup>233</sup> A boy in another RRCY also expressed this: ‘I feel I have parents here. We are always together with them when we are eating and doing things.’<sup>234</sup>

Many boys recognised that they were not only provided with the necessities of life, but were also being taught how to provide these for themselves in a legal and satisfying way. Learning survival and vocational skills is a big advantage for teenagers who previously knew how to fulfil their needs only by scavenging, begging, stealing, using violence or exploitation, or allowing themselves to be abused or exploited. The only alternatives

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<sup>230</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>231</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>232</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>233</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>234</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

were to suffer starvation and extreme discomfort or to assuage these by sniffing rugby, smoking or drinking alcohol. Asked questions such as, ‘Did you learn anything here that will help you to lead a better life?’ many gave replies such as ‘cook food’, or simple but important changes in lifestyle.<sup>235</sup> Sixteen-year-old Lucas, after just two months at the centre, recounted, ‘We become more aware of social issues like taking care of the environment. Cleanliness first thing in the morning, wash ourselves, brush our teeth. After breakfast, we clean up the house and surroundings. It starts to become a habit.’<sup>236</sup>

### *Level three*

A boy in prison had begun to recognise how what he learnt could enable him to change his future lifestyle: ‘Yes – values formation and cooking. When I go home, I won’t use a gun anymore. I will cook.’<sup>237</sup> This recognition was far more evident in the rehabilitation centres, where teaching extended to vocational skills. Boys were enthusiastic about the value of the training. Chito volunteered, ‘The skills I learnt here cannot be forgotten. I learnt hollow block making, T-shirt printing, electrical, furniture making, hair trimming and to cook. Here I became master of cooking.’<sup>238</sup> Many survival and vocational skills were mentioned by boys in all the rehabilitation centres. They included farming and livestock management, gardening, broom-making, welding and driving. Marcus, amongst others, could see clearly the implications of this vocational skills training for

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<sup>235</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>236</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>237</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>238</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY 26/2/2008.

his life: ‘When I leave here my life will be good. I would like to do anything with my hands, like putting ships in bottles, picture framing and lampshade making.’<sup>239</sup>

Leaders take care to choose useful and achievable skills training for the rehabilitation programmes: ‘It took us years to think up what is best for the boys. Now we think farming would be a good idea as it needs less intellectual ability than some other occupations.’<sup>240</sup> However, vocational skills training is chosen to suit each boy’s ability and preferences and some have opted to learn welding, which is a useful trade locally. When 16 year old Amado arrived at an NGO, he was literate and had attended Elementary school, but was not accredited. Since living there, he has studied welding and manpower under the ALS and will become a High school graduate.<sup>241</sup> Ramon, an older lad, when asked how being at the NGO home helped him, said he had been able to finish studying and look for a job. He had completed courses in ‘Electrical Wiring and Design’ and ‘Shielded Metal Arc Welding’ and found that work is available in welding gates, grills and tricycles.<sup>242</sup>

The data indicate that some boys were progressing through three successive levels of *recognition* as they became accustomed to life in the rehabilitation centres. The levels reflect the ways in which their needs are being met and there are parallels with the

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<sup>239</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY 26/2/2008.

<sup>240</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>241</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>242</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

hierarchy of needs, as introduced by Abraham Maslow in 1943.<sup>243</sup> His five-level hierarchy can be summarised as:

- Physiological needs, which include the most basic and instinctive needs vital to survival, such as the need for water, air, food and sleep. These are primary needs, which must be fulfilled ahead of all others.
- Security needs, which include the need for safety and security and are important for survival, but less demanding than the physiological needs.
- Social needs, such as needs for belonging, love and affection, human companionship and acceptance, which can be fulfilled by means of family membership, friendships and involvement in social, community or religious groups.
- Esteem needs, which, after the first three needs have been satisfied, become increasingly important. These include the need for things that reflect on self-esteem, personal worth, social recognition and accomplishment.
- Self-actualising needs, which relate to self-awareness, personal growth, an interest in fulfilling one's own potential and a desire to help others.

My findings in this section accord with this view of a hierarchy of needs, in which meeting the basic, physical needs of children, followed by their need for social involvement and acceptance, are prerequisites for enabling them to progress to raising their self-esteem and fulfilling their personal potential. They also resonate with the more

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<sup>243</sup> Abraham H. Maslow, 'A Theory of Human Motivation', *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): 370-396; Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper, 1943).

recent work of the psychologist Michael Ungar, who found seven key resources that relate to a person's well-being: access to material resources, relationships, identity, power and control, cultural adherence, social justice and cohesion.<sup>244</sup>

### ***c) Enlightenment***

*Enlightenment* in this context is used for the perception that there is something of spiritual significance to consider in addition to the physical, emotional and psychological benefits of life. For the boys I spoke to, this normally involved mention of God and the place they now accorded God in their personal lives. Many boys mentioned the 'values formations' and spiritual teaching, often linking the spiritual with the moral, reflecting the way in which they were taught, so that a typical comment was: 'I learnt prayer and good behaviour from our teachers.'<sup>245</sup> Asked 'what elements of the programme are helping you to change?' the answer would typically include, 'Prayers'<sup>246</sup> or 'I learnt to pray.'<sup>247</sup> Some expressed this as enlightenment, repentance and an intention to change their way of life, as this dialogue illustrates:

Meynard: The formations changed my life. It enlightened my mind to love God and realise that what I was doing is bad.

Researcher: What will you do when you leave?

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<sup>244</sup> Michael Ungar, *Counseling in Challenging Contexts: Working with Individuals and Families across Clinical and Community Settings* (Belmont, CA: Books/Cole, Cengage Learning, 2010), 52, Table 03-02.

<sup>245</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>246</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>247</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.



Meynard: Thank the Lord to be out of my difficulties and go home and help my parents. To help my father as room boy in the hotel.<sup>248</sup>

Recognition of the essential differences between their old way of life and the new lifestyle being offered to them led some boys to an enlightened place of repentance and gratitude, not only to their new programme leaders and house-parents, but also to God. Marcus volunteered, 'When I arrived here it was helpful for me to change. So I am thankful to the Lord to bring me here and give me a chance to change.'<sup>249</sup>

Where there was an organised programme, boys told me they had participated in singing, dancing, games, activities and 'family sessions' from which they had learnt how to behave acceptably. These activities are often led by visiting Christian volunteers, from local churches or from organisations such as Youth for Christ<sup>250</sup> and thus, whilst being enjoyable as activities, incorporate or accompany religious and moral teaching. Enrico, aged 14, after only two months at PREDA, told me 'I like games. I learn teamwork, values and positive attitudes to one another.'<sup>251</sup> The example of good adult role models reinforces the teaching, as one resident was aware: 'I learnt to respect other people, to say 'Good morning' and 'Good evening'. There is guidance here to follow.'<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>249</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>250</sup> Youth for Christ is a non-denominational evangelical Christian international NGO. See <http://www.yfci.org/about/statement-of-faith/> accessed 02/10/2012.

<sup>251</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>252</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

Many spoke of moral and spiritual teaching in the kind of context that related it to their past, present and future lives and appreciated the value of the new way of life that could be available to them. James, a 17-year-old boy who had been at a centre for four months began: 'I think I've been lucky to have been transferred here because I was in jail for three weeks and few of us were chosen. I am lucky to have the chance to learn how to live for good. Volunteers bring us to live here for reasons of support and helping us.'<sup>253</sup>

#### *d) Reflection*

The term *reflection* is used here to describe a stage that boys were found to reach when they had begun to think deeply about their behaviour, adjust to new ideas, listen to others, pray of their own accord, discuss the spiritual teaching and relate it to their lives. The spontaneity and clarity with which the boys related their experiences and expressed their views was a sign that they had gained from having time to reflect upon the direction of their lives. At an early level of reflection, some had simply come to a point where they wanted an end to quarrelling and violence, like the boy in prison who, in answer to my question, 'What would you like to do with your life?' expressed the desire 'To live a peaceful life.'<sup>254</sup> At a more advanced level, however, boys had clearly thought through the implications of their lifestyle and actions and the value of Christian teaching and guidance.

In Christian NGO rehabilitation centres, Bible reading and reflection are an integral part

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<sup>253</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>254</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

of the programme and emphasis is placed on sharing knowledge and experience in an effort to relate the teaching to their everyday lives. Boys said they had been helped by ‘Family sessions’, ‘sharing’, ‘Bible-sharing’, ‘sharing knowledge and ideas’, ‘sharing the problems arising within the centre, family meeting with all the staff and boys’.<sup>255</sup> During this time of reflection, boys start to think about the meaning of life and how the spiritual teaching relates to them personally. For some abused youngsters, the Christian faith brings consolation:

During Holy Week some boys carried an image of Christ holding a cross in the procession. One boy says he is like Christ because he is carrying a cross with him. He was abandoned by his family and now understands that he is not the only one carrying his burdens; Christ carries his burden too. The boy finds consolation in knowing that he’s not alone, not the only person who passed through suffering: even Christ suffers that.<sup>256</sup>

Whereas at the *recognition* stage boys recognise that their lives can be externally different from previously, physically, emotionally and psychologically, in *reflection* they think about why they found themselves in conflict with the law, how they can change internally, what they would like to do with their lives and how their dreams could be achieved. To be able to think deeply requires time, space and freedom from the pressing concerns of survival and safety. It can take months or years for a boy to reflect fully and adjust his ideas to a completely new way of living. Manuel reflected: ‘I have learned a lot from two years’ stay. The whole programme has been beneficial for me. From Bible

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<sup>255</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>256</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

sharing and the reflection, I learned to build more trust and faith in God and other people help me.’<sup>257</sup>

Leaders in rehabilitation centres frequently stated that boys need time in order to change. ‘They do respond to this kind of programme; it is felt that they need a minimum of six months to benefit sufficiently and sometimes longer. The maximum stay is three years.’<sup>258</sup> Some believe that a longer period than six months is needed: ‘We want to change the boys’ lives for the better. They need to stay at least a year to transform them.’<sup>259</sup> The change in mindset is huge, there is much to be learnt and boys need time to reflect, practise, be counselled, reflect again, practise again and so on, with constant reinforcement of the new way of living.

Boys who have lived on the streets and suffered in prison initially tend to be resistant to the discipline and order of institutions. Consistent routine and appropriate methods of control and discipline can help them during the *awakening* phase to reflect on their actions and to establish the changes required to achieve a more peaceful and fulfilling life. After hearing boys in a rehabilitation centre relate their experiences of harsh punishment in prisons, I asked them, ‘What happens *here* when boys do something wrong? What is the punishment?’ Boys volunteered, ‘cleaning’ and ‘gardening’, but

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<sup>257</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>258</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>259</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

staff members told me they do not call it punishment: ‘it is productive activity’.<sup>260</sup> Boys who break rules or hurt someone are given advice and counselling and, in serious or repeated cases, may be asked to sign an agreement to keep the rules. Emphasis is placed on constructive opportunities to amend behaviour rather than on punishment.

#### *e) Finding identity*

One of the features that characterise the stage of *alienation* in abused children is a state of loss of identity.<sup>261</sup> Boys deprived of their basic needs, abused or exploited at home, on the streets and in prison tend to lose any sense of who they are or what part they play in society. Slee identifies ‘a profound loss of self, of authentic connection with others, and of faith’ in the alienation of women.<sup>262</sup> She also observes how they regain a sense of identity at the stage of spiritual awakening: ‘the liberating experience of awakening, breakthrough and a reconnection to their own power of selfhood as well as to a deeper awareness of their connectedness to others and to the divine.’<sup>263</sup>

The term *sense of identity* relates here to how an individual views himself both as a person and in relation to other people.<sup>264</sup> This section looks at how boys at the stage of *awakening* begin to regain a sense of personal identity. Since many aspects of this

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<sup>260</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>261</sup> See 3.2.

<sup>262</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 81.

<sup>263</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 109.

<sup>264</sup> See 1.2.4. for a discussion of identity and Michael Ungar’s definition.

regained identity are evident in the interview data, for the purposes of clarity, they have been grouped here under the headings ‘Individual worth’, ‘Group membership’ and ‘Society participation’.

### *Individual worth*

This includes:

- Self-awareness
- Learning to value oneself
- Believing oneself to be accepted by God (or in a personal relationship with God)
- Improving self-esteem
- Self-respect
- Knowing that one is able to take care of one’s own needs.

In the rehabilitation centres, boys were observed to be in the process of regaining a sense of personal identity and, along with this, their self-esteem, sense of personal worth and self-confidence. A boy in jail had learnt this lesson from the visiting priest, too:

Pepe: Formations help me to reform and change to a better life.

Researcher: What sort of change?

Pepe: I plan not to kill people any more. The violence in my head has gone not to kill people.

Researcher: What made the violence in your head go?

Pepe: Because from the teaching I have learnt to value myself. I learned about God and about myself. Peer pressure caused me to commit the offence.

Researcher: What will you do about that when you go home?

Pepe: I will go with the peer, but will change and not go for violence.<sup>265</sup>

Other boys told me directly what they had gained from life at the NGO centre, using phrases such as, ‘I have higher self-esteem’,<sup>266</sup> or, ‘I have learned to value myself.’ Few boys spoke of their trauma therapy and I refrained from questioning them on this personal matter, but members of staff explained to me how it helped boys to regain a sense of self-worth and identity.<sup>267</sup>

### *Group membership*

The term is used here to include aspects such as being able to:

- mix with others and not be too shy
- have more self-control (responding to conflict)
- resist peer pressure
- show respect for other people
- be a member of one’s own biological family (reconciliation, inclusion)
- forgive parents, guardians, step-parents, relatives and be forgiven
- have confidence to teach siblings and care for them

Boys typically told me: ‘I learn how to mingle with other people without being too shy. I

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<sup>265</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>266</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>267</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008, for example.

have proved to myself I *can* mix’<sup>268</sup> or, ‘Before, I had no self-control, now I reflect before reacting.’<sup>269</sup> Another told me, ‘I have learnt to respect myself and other children.’<sup>270</sup>

Another aid to rebuilding a sense of identity is reconciliation with family members, brought about by family counselling, assisting parents to visit their sons and home visits. After speaking to Amado, I recorded: ‘Today was a big event as six of his siblings came to visit. They live at some distance and it was the first time for seven years that Amado had seen his three youngest sisters. He held on to the smallest one as though he never wanted to let go of her again.’<sup>271</sup>

A number of boys told me that they were inspired to teach their families their new-found knowledge. Felino, aged 16, had only been at PREDA for one month when he said, ‘I have learnt mainly practical things and I am inspired to share those learnings with siblings, close friends and relatives.’<sup>272</sup>

### *Society participation*

This term incorporates life skills necessary for integration into normal society:

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<sup>268</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>269</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>270</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>271</sup> Interview with a boy and field notes, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>272</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.



- ‘normality’: being able to live as others do in the general population
- education, especially literacy and numeracy
- employability
- participation, such as being a member of a church youth group
- understanding of one’s own rights (as a human/minor/child)
- acceptance by society, rather than being seen as different or branded as criminal

The provision of legal aid for a detained child can help him to rebuild his identity:

The case against Ramon was dismissed and he has been issued with a clean record. The certificate testifies that he is a law abiding citizen and has good moral character. He is now considered fit for work, except that he has no birth certificate. I am working on his Registration and Certification as he will need this to get tax and insurance numbers and if he wants to get married.<sup>273</sup>

Along with the vocational skills training, this helps residents to improve their status in the employment market as well as in society in general.

Outings that take the boys into a community where they are not seen as criminals increase their sense of identity as ‘normal citizens’. Juan, aged 25 when I met him, said, ‘I learned how to clean and to love sports on Wednesdays and Fridays. I enjoyed the trip to the beach for swimming and a trip to the falls with the tourists.’<sup>274</sup> Some enjoyed shopping trips, where they were trusted to behave as ‘normal’ customers. Grace Home

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<sup>273</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>274</sup> He meant an area where there were also tourists. Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

boys undertake paid jobs in the local home owners' association. As the leader said: 'In this way, the project is community, family, and church-based.'<sup>275</sup> Church activities also play a large part. Asked how living at the Grace Home had helped him, Amado said he had been able 'to study and to go to church and to Youth Leadership Camp.'<sup>276</sup>

Human rights teaching and awareness-raising has a part to play in the *awakening* of the boys. Many told me they had 'learned about rights of the child'<sup>277</sup> and James stated, 'it is good to have a law to provide for children.'<sup>278</sup> PREDA, in particular, encourages boys who are ready for such involvement to join awareness-raising marches and other human rights activities.<sup>279</sup>

## **Section conclusion**

Whilst many thought only of escaping or were in despair, some boys in prison showed a sense of *awakening* in terms of being disillusioned with their current lifestyle and learning from priests that they should behave better. Their ambition was to live a different life when they regained their freedom. All the boys interviewed in the rehabilitation centres showed signs of awareness of the many benefits of their new way of life and realisation that their personal lives could actually be different. They found

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<sup>275</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>276</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>277</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>278</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>279</sup> 4.2.3.b).viii).

enlightenment in the Bible sharing sessions and had time for reflection on the course of their lives, past, present and future. They were regaining a sense of self-identity that was seen in their new consciousness of their inherent value, their group membership and their ability to participate in society.

Section 4.4. develops the theory of this thesis by addressing the phase of *spiritual transformation* that emerges from the research data.

## **4.4. Spiritual transformation**

### **Introduction**

This section describes the signs of spiritual transformation<sup>280</sup> identified in the lives and accounts of boys who participated in this research. Evidence is taken from interviews with boys in institutions and some who had been reintegrated into the community following their period of rehabilitation, supplemented with data from interviews with members of staff and other adults involved with the boys. The main signs of lasting spiritual change found in these boys can be summarised as: a) improved behaviour, b) repentance, c) a changed attitude, d) a new relationship with God or Christ, e) a confident view of the future, f) a desire to teach others, g) a positive view of parenting, h) successful reintegration and i) potential for responsible adulthood. These eight signifiers form the headings of this section and are illustrated with reference to the interview data.

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<sup>280</sup> Defined in 1.1.2. as ‘a significant positive development in one’s ability to make or find purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, oneself, others and the natural world.’

***a) Improved behaviour***

Enquiries about spiritual aspects of the work were met with immediate, positive responses. Some staff members referred to the religious teaching: ‘Spiritual really helps them and has an effect on their behaviour. During Bible sharing, I observed that when the pastor gives a message or discusses a topic, it really touches their lives considering they are accused.’<sup>281</sup> It was also understood in more general terms: ‘This is part of the spirituality. Behaviour modification, help one another, for the benefit of others. Rehabilitation is impossible without a spiritual process so it’s vital in the course of integration.’<sup>282</sup>

Transformation in boys was clearly apparent to the adults who worked with them over a period of time: ‘I can recognise a boy has made spiritual change by his daily performance, become honest, prohibit themselves to commit a crime offence. Exercise self-discipline, control and determination to apply their rehabilitation programme.’<sup>283</sup> Improved behaviour was noticeable: ‘We see lots of changes. When they first come they are difficult to manage, then they change their behaviour.’<sup>284</sup>

Many boys witnessed, unprompted, to their own spirituality and changes in behaviour. Pedro, aged 18, told me: ‘Here I learnt good things to do and I recognise God and know

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<sup>281</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>282</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>283</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>284</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

God. I'm confident to go out and do good behaviour taught to us by our mothers.'<sup>285</sup>

Frequently, boys reported that they had learned respect for other people: 'I learnt here how to respect other boys and the staff and Mama.' Sincerity and commitment were palpable: 'Every word we hear we follow and do not disobey. I don't do what is prohibited.'<sup>286</sup>

### ***b) Repentance***

In many cases, boys who had previously committed criminal acts had come to understand their wrongdoing and its implications in response to the teaching: 'Most realise what they did is wrong because they learn from the pastors. It's a big part in rehabilitation.'<sup>287</sup> At another RRCY, I was told: 'If you ask them their ideas and opinions I see the spiritual transformation in them. It's touching because they really get the point.'<sup>288</sup> Boys continue to need help in order to move on from this awareness and repentance: 'There's a point of remorse in him, but it needs support from the environment in order to sustain and turn it into a positive experience.'<sup>289</sup>

### ***c) Changed attitude***

The changes in behaviour stem from a fundamental change in attitude: 'Before I did not

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<sup>285</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY 26/2/2008.

<sup>286</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY 26/2/2008.

<sup>287</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>288</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>289</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

want to respect others. In the centre I learned how to respect.’<sup>290</sup> ‘Before, I would not say “sorry”. I would flare up and get into trouble.’<sup>291</sup> Ernesto, resident for two years at a NGO centre, said he learned: ‘to be humble, to love even those who are not relatives, I learned how to cook and to clean and I also learned how to pray to God.’<sup>292</sup> A RRCY resident testified to the stability of his changed attitude in these words: ‘I have it in my heart and apply it in my daily life.’<sup>293</sup>

These boys, who had formerly been on the streets and/or in prison, not only spoke of this change in attitude, but also demonstrated it in their behaviour, speaking to us politely and with respect: ‘Our experience was that it was normal for them to behave quietly, politely and in a friendly, but not too familiar manner.’<sup>294</sup> A boy concluded a group interview with the words: ‘Thank you for the food and for the time to talk about our future plans and other matters.’<sup>295</sup> When asked, ‘What have you learnt here that will help you in later life?’ boys at a NGO centre gave these replies: ‘to speak with other people’, ‘confidence’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘work to earn my own way’, ‘education’ and ‘changed life and attitude’.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>291</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>292</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>293</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>294</sup> Field notes, 20/2/2008.

<sup>295</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008. I sometimes took gifts of cakes or other food when visiting boys in prisons or centres.

<sup>296</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

**d) *A new relationship with God or Christ***

Slee found evidence of ‘relationality’ in women’s spiritual faith development.<sup>297</sup> Many boys I interviewed spoke about God or Jesus as someone with whom they had a personal relationship. Typical of responses in the Catholic centres, Manuel said, ‘I learned to build more trust and faith in God and other people help me. I need God’s guidance to overcome challenges to me.’<sup>298</sup> In the Philippines, Mass is celebrated nightly for nine days before Christmas. Several boys returning from home visits said they had been able to complete all nine days. Some live near to one another and attend Sunday afternoon Mass together.<sup>299</sup>

The Protestant evangelical teaching stresses the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.<sup>300</sup> Boys explained how this relationship affected other areas of their lives. For instance, Amado told me: ‘I have made a Christian commitment and am now afraid to do something wrong’ and ‘I am closer to God, faithful to people I am with. It changes my relationship with people as well as with God.’<sup>301</sup> Amado said he feels changed: ‘I accepted the Lord as my Saviour. I am not thinking of doing more bad things. I want a quiet life. I don’t want to go to jail.’<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 135-161.

<sup>298</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>299</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>300</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>301</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>302</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

When Isaac told me, ‘there was a big change from 18 to 20 years and I am happy with that change’, this dialogue ensued:

Researcher: What helped you at this centre to make the change?

Isaac: Because I have known the Lord. They showed the gospel to me in the home.

Researcher: What difference has that made?

Isaac: I learned to respect my family and authorities.<sup>303</sup>

Isaac now does voluntary work feeding street kids. He told me, ‘I tell them the main thing that made my life change is Christ or God.’<sup>304</sup>

Hearing his programme leader tell me, ‘There has been a big change in Danilo during the past three years’, Danilo agreed, saying, ‘Everything changed when I accepted the Lord. It’s very good if your life is with the Lord.’<sup>305</sup> When I asked him, ‘Do you think it possible someone can make a real change without that?’ he said simply, ‘The Lord was the one who changed my life.’<sup>306</sup> The leader followed up this interview by telling me, ‘Danilo is a true example of spiritual transformation.’<sup>307</sup>

#### *e) A confident view of the future*

In contrast to hearing how boys in jail felt desolate and without hope for the future,

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<sup>303</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>304</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>305</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>306</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>307</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.



many boys from rehabilitation programmes expressed not only hope, but also strong and confident ambition. Asked about his future, Amado said, 'I have a bright future because if I study very well I'll be able to achieve my dreams.' He portrayed these dreams: 'To work abroad, to pass the ALS and join the US Navy. To earn a big salary and help my sisters.'<sup>308</sup> Another said: 'If I have a job, I'll buy a house in Barahay.'<sup>309</sup> Some ambitions may have been unrealistic, but Ramon already had a short-term contract doing welding in the shop next door, while he awaited results of an interview for a permanent job with a trade company.<sup>310</sup>

I would sometimes ask a boy, 'What are your dreams?' This response was typical: 'When I go from here to continue what I have learnt here and to change outside.'<sup>311</sup> Others, like Danilo, were more explicit about the link between their ambition and their new-found spirituality: 'I want to be a doctor. That is my heart's desire. Because the Lord put that in my heart.'<sup>312</sup> A RRCY resident also articulated this connection:

My ambition is to leave here with my learnings and help my father (my mother died).  
Cooking and pig care, sheep and goats. Most of all I can't forget how God loves me.

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<sup>308</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>309</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008. Barahay was described by the staff member present as 'a good district where foreigners live'.

<sup>310</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>311</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>312</sup> Interview with a boy at Grace Home, 16/2/2008. This dream was highly ambitious though not impossible. On arrival at Grace Home, Danilo, at 16, was in Grade 1. At the time of interview, he was praying he had passed the Elementary Examination, at his third attempt. To become a doctor would require four years in High School, four years at college, three years pre-medical training, four years medical training and one year as an intern. He had left the Grace Home and lived in a foster home, but the leader thought that a church member might pay for his medical training.<sup>312</sup>

When I leave I want to continue my mechanical skills and continue to change my life and be good.<sup>313</sup>

Dreams were sometimes connected directly with the spiritual teaching. Whilst some wanted to become pastors,<sup>314</sup> others admitted that they could not be sure they would continue to go to church when they returned home because ‘we know we will be influenced by friends, but will always treasure what we have learned here.’<sup>315</sup>

*f) Desire to teach others*

Boys in both governmental and non-governmental rehabilitation centres frequently expressed the desire to teach what they had learned to others, especially to their siblings and other members of the family: ‘I learned what I can share outside.’<sup>316</sup> This testified to their perception of the value of the teaching and to their confidence in their own ability to impart it to others.

The content of this teaching was not confined to practical matters, such as cooking, cleaning, building skills and ways of earning a living, although these were often mentioned, but, for some longer-stay residents, to more personal and spiritual issues. Paul, a NGO centre resident for two years, when asked how he thought what he learned at the centre would help him in later life, replied, ‘The good things I learned here, I will

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<sup>313</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>314</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>315</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>316</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

share with my family and peers when I grow up.’ Pressed to explain what these ‘good things’ were, he listed ‘values’, ‘respect to others’, ‘praying the rosary’ and ‘cleanliness’ (personal hygiene).<sup>317</sup> There were also reports following home visits, that a boy starts to say grace before meals, somewhat to the surprise of his family, and that he expects everyone to eat together.

***g) A positive view of parenting***

In order to gauge the attitude of youths, I would often ask them, ‘When you grow up and, if you marry and have children of your own, what will you do if your boy does something wrong?’ Considering the poor parenting most of them had suffered as children and their harsh treatment in prison, even by so-called ‘houseparents’,<sup>318</sup> their immediate responses were a testimony to their internalisation of the teaching, good parental role models and the simulated positive family life of the centres. Typical replies by RRCY boys were:

When I am grown up, if my son does wrong, I will talk to the child and let him realise what he did is not good. That’s all.<sup>319</sup>

Tell my child not to do bad things, to do good things and not do bad like I did.<sup>320</sup>

Give advice to be good, not be like us or follow my footsteps and be put in prison.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>318</sup> Interview with a staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>319</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>320</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>321</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

I'll advise or counsel my children. I don't want my children to follow my footsteps. If possible, not go to CY.<sup>322</sup>

Asked, 'What will you do to stop them from getting into trouble?' they offered: 'Send them to school, tell them right behaviour. I will provide their basic needs.'<sup>323</sup>

In the Protestant NGO programme, replies were more specific. Asked 'When you are older and have a wife and children, what do you want for them?' Amado responded: 'To let them feel the good things I am doing for them. Rear them properly and send them to school. Teach them to be good persons. I want three kids. I shall teach them to pray, go to church and study well – not to be like me!'<sup>324</sup> Asked, 'What plans do you have for your children?' Isaac responded: 'I'll do my best to teach them a better way of living. Remind them not to follow my footsteps. If I have enough resources, I shall send them to school and most important I will guide them to Christ.'<sup>325</sup>

#### ***h) Successful reintegration***

Isaac, who had moved on from the rehabilitation programme, told me his dream was, 'To get out of poverty.'<sup>326</sup> Asked, 'How will you achieve it?' he replied, 'Try my best to find a job and work hard. I want to set up a business with my partner to provide cooked porridge.' He was already taking responsibility for his partner, her young daughter and

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<sup>322</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008. By CY, the boy means RRCY.

<sup>323</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>324</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>325</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>326</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

his own expected child.<sup>327</sup>

Younger boys, whom I visited in their shanty-type homes in Manila, following reintegration with their families, were reported by their guardians to have changed their attitudes and behaviour as a result of the rehabilitation programme. They stayed at home and helped with the chores rather than roaming the streets at night. Finding employment was not easy, but they worked legally and honestly and brought extra income into the family home. They behaved respectfully and did not get into fights or other trouble.

*i) Potential for responsible adulthood*

Although a steady and productive career may not be evidence of spiritual transformation, it shows what boys can achieve if the rehabilitation programme has succeeded in helping them to transform their lives. RRCY leaders try to stay in touch with boys who have left and invite them to revisit the centre to encourage others. In each centre, staff members told some ‘success stories’ about boys whose lives had been transformed during their time in the centre and were leading worthwhile lives in the police force, social work, business, information technology and other careers.<sup>328</sup>

Sometimes staff members told me personal stories of how they had been ‘rescued’ and set on to a better path in life. Emanuel explained:

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<sup>327</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>328</sup> See 4.1. and 4.2.

It helped me to go to school. I got a scholarship from the NGO. When I finished school, the NGO leader sent me to medical school. I graduated as a Nursing Aide and am now completing nursing training. I am still studying and working here with the boys, four evenings a week, and the rest of the week going to school and working in a clinic.<sup>329</sup>

## **Section conclusion**

This section discussed signs of apparent *spiritual transformation* and illustrated how boys can be seen to internalise and establish positive changes as a lasting feature of their lives. The analysis reveals ways in which, following on from the process of *awakening*, which boys often experience when brought from prison into a caring community, a firm basis is constructed by leaders in order to develop, enhance, support and establish *spiritual transformation*. The integrated programme of home life, educational, physical and spiritual activities, together with emotional therapy, combines to become a positive period in the lives of boys and prepares them for reintegration into society.

Reconciliation with the family is of utmost importance. It is vital that role models, discipline and the whole of life is consistent with spiritual input and that sufficient time is given for reflection, recovery and changes in lifestyle and attitude, so that boys can internalise the teaching and establish a mindset that enables them to live independently and happily as responsible citizens.

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<sup>329</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

## **Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the work of all rehabilitation centres visited for this research in respect of imprisoned boys (4.1. and 4.2.) and discussed the processes of *awakening* (4.3.) and *spiritual transformation* (4.4.).

Chapter Five discusses the effects of environment on the likelihood of achieving spiritual transformation as opposed to regression into alienation and discusses the implications of this thesis for scholarship, policy and practice, suggesting areas for future academic research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THEORY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Introduction

Chapters Three and Four identified relevant factors emerging from the boys' stories and elements of prison life and rehabilitation programmes that relate to the thesis argument. They demonstrated how patterns of *alienation*, *awakening* and *transformation* are intrinsic to the boys' spiritual lives, from their early days of poverty and deprivation, through the rehabilitation process to their eventual reintegration into society.

These patterns are not distinct stages, but merge into one another and a former state can be revisited. However, from the extensive analysis of the data that underlies the argument in 4.3., there emerges a general progression from *alienation* to an experience of *awakening*, which can be consolidated to a point of *transformation*.

This thesis argues that *awakening* can be a condition from which one can either progress towards lasting *transformation* or regress into former, or further, *alienation* and that external agents can be influential in this process. 5.1. demonstrates how, at the stage of awakening, circumstances of boys' lives can work towards or against their transition to a stage at which they are able to make lasting changes in their lives. These findings suggest a path that can be followed to encourage the spiritual transformation of imprisoned boys and lead them towards more fulfilling adult lives. The new model of processes of spiritual transformation is depicted diagrammatically in Figure 5.1.



The thesis makes a further contribution to scholarship in its classification of models of care for children in conflict with the law, using the original terms: *Containment*, *Boundaried Care* and *Developing Trust*.<sup>1</sup> Whilst the *Boundaried Care* model (unlike the *Containment* model) incorporates many features that were observed to encourage progression towards spiritual transformation, the *Developing Trust* model is based most strongly on the principles advanced in this conclusion.

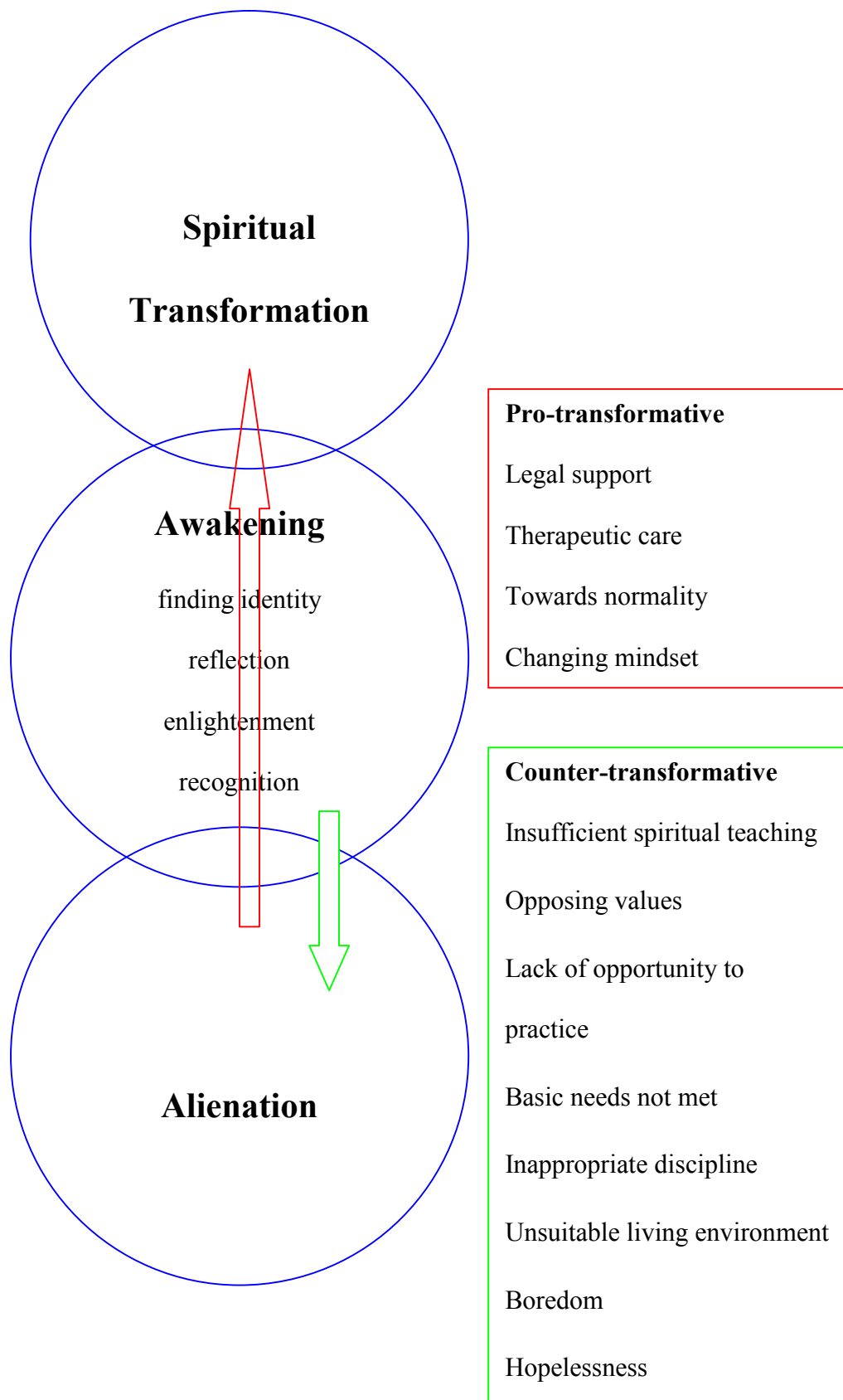
This chapter consists of three sections. 5.1. discusses transformative action, distinguishing between *pro-transformative action* and *counter-transformative action*. 5.2. reflects on the use of the theoretical framework of spiritual transformation theory and faith development theory in this different context. 5.3. considers the implications of this thesis for scholarship, policy and practice and suggests areas for future research.

## **5.1. Transformative action**

This section demonstrates, firstly, that appropriate intervention consistent with the process of spiritual *awakening* can encourage a young person's *spiritual transformation* (5.1.1.). This proactive intervention is termed *pro-transformative action*. The second part (5.1.2.) examines factors that can create barriers to development at the stages of *alienation* and *awakening* and cause boys to revert to their old way of life, rather than move towards constructive change. This effect is termed *counter-transformative action*.

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<sup>1</sup> See 1.2.3.



*Figure 5.1. Processes of Spiritual Transformation*

### 5.1.1. Pro-transformative action

This subsection demonstrates factors that can assist and encourage spiritual transformation in detained boys. The main argument is that action can be taken to facilitate awakening boys to consolidate and develop changes in mindset and lifestyle that become habitual and internalised. It draws out from the data components of the rehabilitation programmes that inspire and nurture the process of awakening and the factors that enable the detained boys to recognise and value the opportunity to progress in their spiritual lives. This effect is named *pro-transformative action* because it positively and proactively builds upon the stage of awakening and works with a boy towards a state of spiritual transformation as defined in this thesis.<sup>2</sup>

Components of programmes in the jails and rehabilitation centres are described above.<sup>3</sup> In the four jails visited there were very few activities and little or no programme of rehabilitation.<sup>4</sup> Regional government centres based on the Therapeutic Community Modality employ a centrally devised manual that sets out a structure on which to base a programme adapted to the specific needs and resources of each RRCY.<sup>5</sup> Each NGO centre has devised its own rehabilitation programme based on its philosophy and objectives.<sup>6</sup> There are many common elements in the RRCY and NGO programmes, all

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<sup>2</sup> See 1.1.2.

<sup>3</sup> See 3.1., 4.1. and 4.2.

<sup>4</sup> See 3.1.

<sup>5</sup> See 4.1.

<sup>6</sup> See 4.2.

of which work constructively towards transformation and reintegration into society.

Each centre has documented its formal structure individually, often using different linguistic terms for similar programme aspects. Table 5.1. has been created to identify components found in at least one centre and to organise them, for the purposes of this thesis, under four major headings: Legal support, Therapeutic care, Towards normality and Changing mindset. These aspects are essential, interdependent and concurrent.

Not every specific item happens at every centre, but all four aspects are primary components of the centres where spiritual transformation was identified. Table 5.2 shows which centres were found to practise each component. The RRCY programme is included just once since all were conducted on the same guidelines. A caveat must be stated that the absence of any indication that a centre undertakes a specific activity is not proof that it does not occur in that centre. Research visits varied in length<sup>7</sup> and more detailed (and different) information was gained at some locations than at others.

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<sup>7</sup> See Table 2.2.

<p><b>LEGAL SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Personal support through the court process</p> <p>Judicial intervention</p> <p>Financial aid</p> <p>Practical assistance</p> <p>Human and legal rights education</p> <p>Legal representation</p> <p>Legal alternative to prison</p> <p>Personal advice</p> <p>Bringing family into legal process</p> <p>Active social worker</p> <p>Personal counselling</p> <p>Legal advice</p>	<p><b>THERAPEUTIC CARE</b></p> <p>Provision of nutritious food</p> <p>Safe shelter and accommodation</p> <p>Initial health check</p> <p>Medical treatment</p> <p>Dental treatment</p> <p>Personal hygiene practice</p> <p>Regular sleep in a clean bed</p> <p>Personal locker for belongings</p> <p>Personal counselling</p> <p>Emotional and psychotherapy</p> <p>Trauma therapy</p> <p>Peaceful environment</p> <p>Healing atmosphere</p>
<p><b>TOWARDS NORMALITY</b></p> <p>Normal domestic routine</p> <p>Simulated family life</p> <p>Homely accommodation</p> <p>Community belonging</p> <p>Relative freedom</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Share daily chores</p> <p>Care of environment</p> <p>Positive adult role models</p> <p>Positive peer role models</p> <p>School attendance or non-formal education</p> <p>Sport and activity</p> <p>Social behaviour training</p> <p>Vocational training</p> <p>Visits from family and home visits</p> <p>Family therapy</p> <p>Preparation for return home</p>	<p><b>CHANGING MINDSET</b></p> <p>Bible teaching</p> <p>Prayers</p> <p>Values formation</p> <p>Participation in Mass or worship</p> <p>Stories/ discussion</p> <p>Christian conversion, commitment and discipleship</p> <p>Religion applied to everyday life</p> <p>Appropriate discipline</p> <p>Encouraging self-discipline</p> <p>Improving self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence</p> <p>Human rights teaching</p> <p>Assurance of constant, reliable, unconditional love</p> <p>Parent/guardian seminars</p> <p>Opportunities for service</p> <p>Enlarging vision, ambition and potential future</p>

*Table 5.1. The main elements of the rehabilitation process*

LEGAL SUPPORT	PREDA	AHON SA KALYE	BALAY PASILUNGAN	RRCY	JAILS
Advocacy	Proactive	As required	As required	As required	Infrequently
Personal support through court process	Proactive – many directions	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Judicial intervention	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Financial aid	Yes	Free legal professional aid	Free legal professional aid	Free legal professional aid	No
Practical assistance (e.g. transport)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Take boy to court or NGO
Human and legal rights education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Legal representation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
Legal alternative to prison	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Personal advice	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Bringing family into legal process	Yes	Yes, when appropriate	Yes		No
Active social worker	Yes	Similar help	Yes	Yes	Often unavailable
Personal counselling	Yes – fully	Yes – fully	Yes	Yes professional	No
Legal advice	Yes	Yes	Yes FREELAVA	Yes	No

THERAPEUTIC CARE	PREDA	AHON SA KALYE	BALAY PASILUNGAN	RRCY	JAILS
Provision of nutritious food	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Inadequate
Safe shelter and accommodation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Initial health check	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Medical treatment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dental treatment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Personal hygiene practice	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Regular sleep in a bed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Personal locker for belongings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Personal counselling	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Emotional and psychotherapy	Yes		Yes	Yes	No
Trauma therapy	Yes				
Peaceful environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Healing atmosphere	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

<b>TOWARDS NORMALITY</b>	<b>PREDA</b>	<b>AHON SA KALYE</b>	<b>BALAY PASILUNGAN</b>	<b>RRCY</b>	<b>JAILS</b>
Normal domestic routine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Simulated family life	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Homely accommodation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Community belonging	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some	No
Relative freedom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Share daily chores	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some
Responsibility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Care of environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Positive adult role models	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Positive peer role models	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
School attendance or non-formal education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rarely
Sport and activity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Very little
Social behaviour training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Vocational training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Little or none

<b>CHANGING MINDSET</b>	<b>PREDA</b>	<b>AHON SA KALYE</b>	<b>BALAY PASILUNGAN</b>	<b>RRCY</b>	<b>JAILS</b>
Bible teaching	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Very little
Prayers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Values formation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some
Participation in Mass/worship	Yes	Yes		Yes	No
Stories/ discussion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Christian commitment and discipleship	Yes	Yes			No
Application of religion to everyday life	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Discipline	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Encouraging self-discipline	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Improving self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Human rights action	Yes				No
Assurance of constant, reliable, unconditional love	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Parent/guardian seminars	Yes				No
Opportunities for service	Yes	Yes			No

*Table 5.2. A comparison of programme components in the institutions*

The various components of the programme work together to enable boys to progress from the stage of *awakening* to the stage of *spiritual transformation*. Spiritual teaching at the RRCY and NGO centres was found to be regular, comprehensive and consistent. Indications of spiritual transformation appear when this teaching is supported and reinforced by a consistently caring, holistic lifestyle approach to rehabilitation.<sup>8</sup> Some of the ways in which this takes place are illustrated here with quotes drawn from the data.

### **Legal support**

RRCY and NGO programmes attend to the court process and assist boys through it. They provide transport to court for boys and their families, advocate for them, teach them their legal rights and give advice and personal support throughout the process, which is often long, frustrating and gruelling. Components of legal assistance provision identified in this research are shown in Tables 5.1. and 5.2. They comprise: advocacy, personal support, judicial intervention, financial aid, practical assistance, human rights education, legal representation, provision of a legal alternative to prison, personal advice, bringing family into the legal process, assistance of an active social worker, counselling and legal advice. Isaac was bailed out of jail to live in a NGO centre. Eventually, charges were dropped on his court cases due to his good behaviour there. Asked whether the two years in the programme had helped him, his first response was ‘Yes, because of counselling in the family about my criminal case.’<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See 4.3.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with a boy and a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.



Rehabilitation centres provide an alternative to jail, which is acceptable to the courts if a boy is convicted of a crime or deemed to be in need of diversionary treatment. Legal assistance is essential as the team works towards a final report, recommending to the court that the case be discharged and the boy's record wiped clean.<sup>10</sup> By this means, he can regain his liberty (on condition that he remains in the programme, if so directed) and work towards obtaining a certificate of citizenship, which will allow him to gain proper employment in his adulthood. In his personal life, he can begin to shift from a state of alienation from his family and community to becoming an integrated member of society.

### **Therapeutic care**

The provision of basic needs is known to be a prerequisite for attending to higher needs.<sup>11</sup> Boys observed and interviewed had suffered periods in childhood when their basic needs were unmet. All the rehabilitation centres visited prioritised good physical and emotional care. The food provided was observed to be nutritious and ample in quantity; boys often remarked upon it. Residents learn how to cook and serve food and how to sit at tables and use cutlery. They are provided with suitable clothing, safe shelter and accommodation, clean beds in which to sleep and lockers for personal belongings, which they can acquire and keep.

The boys were eating at tables set outside in the courtyard. There was a basic kitchen and a locker room, toilets and washing area, with washed clothes hanging on a line.

One boy showed us his locker. Everything was so neatly folded that I asked if we

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>11</sup> See discussion in 4.3.

could photograph it. He was pleased for us to do so and proudly posed by it. Upstairs was a large room with wooden beds (not bunks) for all the boys, each having a thin mat on the bed. The room was clean and light and there was a spacious landing adjoining it.<sup>12</sup>

In the transport en route to PREDA from jail, staff members try to assure boys that they will now be safe. One or two experienced boys are taken along to help with this reassurance. Not all newcomers are able to trust the truth of what they hear since they have become accustomed to lies, deception, abuse and exploitation. Some try to run away but most respond to the initial love and physical care that is offered.

On admission, boys are given health checks and attention is paid to any necessary medical or dental treatment. The food, health care and sports activities were reported to promote growth in previously malnourished children, as in this case of a 19-year-old: 'Danilo came to us three years ago. He was a small boy, but is now at least a foot taller.'<sup>13</sup> Boys are taught personal hygiene practice, which is insisted upon by the staff. Asked, 'How will what you learned here help you to integrate?' Patrick, aged 15, replied: 'Basically it gets into the system, the routine of washing myself and cleaning my surroundings. Now it's part of my system and I will take it home. I learnt to pray before and after meals. It becomes a habit.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Field notes, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

The mental and emotional state of boys is addressed and a personal treatment plan, known in RRCY as ‘planned behaviour modification’, is created. This plan might include personal counselling, emotional therapy, psychotherapy, primal or trauma therapy; regular monitoring ensures that these are provided for as long as required. A psychologist provides individual therapy and teaches, by means of group discussion, topics such as humility, anger management and conflict resolution.<sup>15</sup> Boys find themselves living in a peaceful environment, often for the first time in their lives, and in a healing atmosphere, which promotes recovery from their damaging experiences: ‘Here I experienced peace.’<sup>16</sup>

Michael Ungar found that ‘clients are the experts on the challenges confronting them as they participate directly in defining their own problems’; they are ‘best equipped to locate solutions.’<sup>17</sup> A leader told me, ‘even though they are older, boys will ask us to read a bedtime story. They need to go back to their childhood and do childish things.’<sup>18</sup>

### **Towards normality**

The use of this expression does not imply that CICL are abnormal in any respect. In terms of mental health, many imprisoned boys show resilience by surviving the chaotic lifestyle of home, street and jail. Ungar notes the capacity of individuals exposed to

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 28.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

significant adversity ‘to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain their well-being.’<sup>19</sup> However, tactics for ‘surviving and thriving’ can include behaviours considered deviant by others, as it ‘depends how the child, choosing from the resources at hand, finds a sense of coherence in his or her life.’<sup>20</sup> Youths argued that their ‘potentially self-destructive pathways’, such as drug and alcohol misuse, early sexual activity, school truancy, living on the streets and self-harming, brought them benefits such as ‘a sense of meaning and purpose, a sense of belonging and attachment, recreation, personal and social power, social support, and even basic necessities like food and shelter.’<sup>21</sup>

After life on the streets and in prison, it is a major change for boys to experience what many described to me as ‘a normal life’, constructed for them around a daily domestic routine and a simulation of family life, supervised by caring, committed houseparents who become substitute parents. Instead of a crowded prison cell, accommodation is adequately comfortable and homely, though remaining modest enough to be within a normal range for the boys.<sup>22</sup>

Peter Hopkins et al. found that ‘a range of different relationships’ in the lives of young people can ‘influence the transmission of religion, or perspectives that inform their

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Ungar, *Counseling in Challenging Contexts: Working with Individuals and Families across Clinical and Community Settings* (Belmont, CA: Books/Cole, Cengage Learning, 2010), 14

<sup>20</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 31.

<sup>21</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Field notes, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

religiosity and spirituality.’<sup>23</sup> Since ‘significant people, places and practices in the young people’s lives’,<sup>24</sup> affect young people’s spiritual development, the relationships they build with staff and peers within a rehabilitation centre are clearly important. Often for the first time in their lives, the boys are genuinely loved and guided by adults. As Ungar comments, ‘The child hungry for an alternative identity finds, through these institutional relationships with adults, a pathway to a more resilient story.’<sup>25</sup> Asked what was good about being at a centre, a boy said: ‘the lifestyle they teach us, how they treat us just like their own children, teach us to pray, to respect others and how to stand on our own.’<sup>26</sup>

Within this homely environment, boys learn to eat regular, balanced meals, to share daily chores, to take care of their environment and to become part of a caring community. In a situation of relative freedom, they receive social behaviour training and are able to develop a sense of responsibility. Unlike on the streets or in jails, they have positive adult and peer role models on which to base a new lifestyle. Boys frequently explained to me how much happier they had become by learning so much: ‘Here I feel better. I feel happy and contented because I learn a lot.’<sup>27</sup>

On admittance to a centre, boys are given an educational assessment and invited to

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<sup>23</sup> Peter Hopkins, Elizabeth Olsen, Rachel Pain and Giselle Vincett, ‘Mapping intergenerationalities: the formation of youthful religiosities’ *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 36, No. 2 (2011): 326.

<sup>24</sup> Hopkins et al., ‘Mapping intergenerationalities’, 325.

<sup>25</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 187.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

discuss their intellectual needs and wishes.<sup>28</sup> Since many are illiterate and unschooled, they generally begin with tuition at the centre, working towards being placed at a suitable grade in school. ‘One very good thing that happened to me here was my education’ (at 18, Paul had reached the 1<sup>st</sup> year in Secondary School).<sup>29</sup>

If school is not an option, older boys receive non-formal education and vocational training. The wide range of vocational skills training available in various rehabilitation centres is documented in this thesis.<sup>30</sup> Education and training are vital components of personal development and of preparation for integration into society. Further activities with these aims include visiting shopping malls, churches, parks and other public places and attending festivals, sports contests and human rights events.

In order to promote reconciliation between boys and their families, rehabilitation programmes encourage visits from family members and facilitate family therapy sessions. When a child nears completion of his rehabilitation programme and satisfies the courts with good behaviour reports, preparations are made for his return home. Visits to his family home, usually for a couple of days, are monitored and repeated until a multi-disciplinary staff team decides he is ready to leave the centre and that the family and community are ready to receive him.

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>30</sup> See 4.1. and 4.2.

## **Changing mindset**

The legal support to bring the boy's court case to a satisfactory conclusion, the therapeutic care he receives at the centre and arrangements that enable him steadily to achieve a normal lifestyle combine to create firm ground on which to build. With these in place, he can progress towards the change of mindset that is spiritual transformation. The keystone of many rehabilitation programmes is spiritual teaching focused on the needs of a teenage boy in the specific context of bringing him from a state of alienation and impotence to becoming a capable, responsible member of a community.

RA9344 decrees that boys in rehabilitation be given spiritual enrichment.<sup>31</sup> This could be defined as the endowment of spiritual wealth that adds something valuable and worthwhile, heightens, enhances, improves and makes richer a person's quality of life by means of an action or process that enriches the spirit.

Spiritual enhancement of young people in government-run programmes is embedded in 'values formations' teaching, which is, basically (though not exclusively), concerned with Christian values. It features respect for oneself, respect for others, love of God, care for the environment, work ethics and divine guidance. Prayers with a rosary and other prescribed prayers are recited at certain times of day; boys participate in Sunday Mass or, if no priest is present, an alternative worship session. Spiritual input includes Bible reading and values formation sessions under the guidance of a priest or programme

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<sup>31</sup> Section 52. (8)

worker and sharing thoughts by means of discussion is used to apply religious teaching to everyday life. A psychologist integrates this into further teaching: 'We talk about creation and sin. What is sin all about? How it affects them. Their case is a sin.'<sup>32</sup> These are new ideas for them. Before, telling a lie was normal.'<sup>33</sup>

RRCY residents attend local churches. Visiting members of organisations, such as YFC,<sup>34</sup> lead activities, which include music and dance and 'values formation' sessions.<sup>35</sup> In all three RRCYs, staff members asserted that the spiritual programme makes a profound difference to the lives of residents and results in changes of attitude and behaviour. Structured activities, home-life services and spiritual input are integrated to form a holistic lifestyle in a deliberately created therapeutic community. Typical of responses, when asked, 'How will it help you when you leave?' was the reply, 'I am committed to sustain the lessons I learnt here.'<sup>36</sup>

In rehabilitation centres, spiritual teaching is given daily and a greater proportion of time is given to learning about spirituality, religion, values formation and morality than the sparse provision in the jails. This teaching is Bible-based, consistent and made relevant to the boys' lives. It is regular and repetitive. It is constantly and deliberately supported

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<sup>32</sup> 'Case' is used here to mean the criminal offence that gave rise to arrest and a court case.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>34</sup> Youth for Christ is an international Christian organisation that works with young people and is active in the Philippines. <http://cfcyouthforchrist.net/about/philosophy/> accessed 18/1/2012

<sup>35</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.



by the whole of life in the centre, so that nothing counteracts the programme's aims and objectives. Each programme component is consistent with teaching boys that they are worthy of love and that they are loved by others and by God. They have been victims of abuse and have done wrong, but they can break the patterns of their previous lives. Boys experience love in action, combined with appropriate and necessary discipline, which is carefully administered and explained.

The experience of appropriate discipline is another important change in the lives of boys. At one RRCY the use of an 'Expeditor group'<sup>37</sup> of boys shows that rule-breaking is taken seriously, but not as an opportunity for violent reaction because there are alternative ways to get out of trouble. Conflicts are settled within the group and offenders are given advice and counselling from members of staff.<sup>38</sup> In other RRCY programmes, whilst 'disciplinary' tasks such as extra cleaning or weeding are meted out, the emphasis is on giving guidance and counselling and obtaining a commitment not to repeat the rule-breaking.<sup>39</sup> By this means, boys are allowed to stumble and pick themselves up again until the new behaviour becomes a permanent change of mindset.

Teaching at PREDA is based on a liberal interpretation of Roman Catholic teaching.<sup>40</sup> This open facility has spiritual enhancement integrated throughout its comprehensive

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<sup>37</sup> Described in 4.1.2.b).

<sup>38</sup> Interview with a staff member, Argao RRCY, 19/2/2008.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

programme. The well-developed structure is underwritten by care for children as individuals. Non-formal education includes human rights teaching and related activities. Activities ‘conducted or arranged for residents to aid their values formation and their spiritual wellbeing’ include Bible readings with sharing and reflection, religious services within or outside the centre, seminars, spiritual retreats, workshops using puppets and community service and outreach programmes.<sup>41</sup> These encourage self-esteem, respect for one another, mutual empathy and building inner resources.

A teacher responsible for religious and human rights education explained how he puts across a practical, personalised religion by basing it on the boys’ lives, rather than on church doctrine: ‘I try to give the boys a practical view of what’s happening with them, rather than “churchy stuff”. Generally, I teach from the lives of saints, such as St. Dominic or St. Augustine, who was bad then discerned a better way to live.’<sup>42</sup>

Two-day spiritual retreats combine intensive spiritual input with fun activities. Retreats give the leader an opportunity to learn the boys’ problems, to enquire whether they are happy and ‘still growing’ and, if not, to find out why.<sup>43</sup> He purposely calls boys by their real names, not their nicknames, to give them dignity:

Working with boys who have low self-esteem, we need to know God loves everyone equally. Even when we do wrong, God still looks on us as his special being. We must

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<sup>41</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2/2008.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

constantly remind children that we are all equal and God is full of mercy and compassion. He looks on good things we have done. If he looked only at bad things, what would happen to us? I tell the boys I am not perfect and I have done wrong things myself and I explain the importance of eagerness to learn from our faults.<sup>44</sup>

The retreat comprises two ‘Modules for Recollection’. The first employs the story of Jesus with two men on the road to Emmaus.<sup>45</sup> This leads to talking about relationships, the desirability of good camaraderie and problems that can arise if, when integrated into society, boys ‘lean on someone’. The second module is based on the story of ‘the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is very obedient and a model of humbleness. Mary obeyed God and did good things even though Christ was crucified. There is power in doing good in spite of suffering.’ Boys learn that when they have a problem, such as finding that a possession is missing, instead of starting a fight with the suspected person, it is better to moderate their anger and talk about the problem, as fighting increases rather than resolves problems.<sup>46</sup>

For another activity, each boy has a sheet of paper stuck to his back. All the boys write good things about each person on his paper. When they read their own papers, they apparently laugh to discover that they are seen as kind, or that others are aware of their actions, such as when they share food. This activity leads them to think about one another’s good qualities. ‘Some cry because they are touched by the words said about

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<sup>44</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>45</sup> St Luke Chapter 24 verses 13-35. *The Holy Bible*.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

them. They are accustomed to groups on the street that say only bad things about them and are now in a group that can appreciate the good things.<sup>47</sup>

Following this day of spiritual focus, there is a fun day, when the boys explore and play outside. ‘This provides a valuable opportunity to practise what they learnt during the first day. They can see how they can manage their anger and lower their tempers.

Bonding is important and I find it good to see them happy outside.’<sup>48</sup> They know that if they fail they can try again. They need frequent reminders and time for reflection: ‘One would need to talk to them monthly for a whole day to recollect their works and deeds. Self-awareness is very important, contemplating what they have done.’<sup>49</sup>

The teacher tells boys that when they make mistakes they should not hesitate to ask staff members for help. He leaves his office door open for boys to come in and chat. If they express complaints such as ‘I have to do extra cleaning as a punishment’, he says ‘what are you learning?’ and the boy may recall his teaching: ‘I should cherish my time here and learn from reports.’<sup>50</sup> He advises that, since others are trying to help them, they should exert effort to help themselves. Sometimes, during leisure time, he tells them stories or shows movies about Jesus and explains them.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

Prayer has a place in the spiritual transformation process. At the end of each Mass attended by staff members, ‘Prayers of the Faithful’ include the children. Every day, the teacher prays for the children in his private prayers.<sup>52</sup> In each child care centre, after morning and evening sessions, children pray for themselves.<sup>53</sup> After the daily Bible reading, the leader links the passage to the children’s lives and teaches how they can modify their behaviour. They sometimes hold hands and pray for little things.<sup>54</sup>

The ‘psycho-spiritual’<sup>55</sup> programme requires considerable staff commitment and training and a need for exemplary staff role models because boys imitate their actions. Staff members also ‘gain self-fulfilment, self-esteem, love and belongingness’; some study social work ‘in order to understand the dynamics of helping children.’<sup>56</sup> One declared that they ‘enjoy working with the kids, loving their company, going to the pool and seeing the happiness in their eyes’, as was evident whenever I accompanied them.<sup>57</sup> It was clearly evident to the boys, too, and evoked a response in their lives.

The Balay Pasilungan shelter is an open facility, which offers education, meals, clothing, medical care, spiritual and values formation, love and care to enable the children to

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>55</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/8/2008

reintegrate into adult life and society.<sup>58</sup> An open facility, its programme is based on freedom, education and respect.<sup>59</sup> Resident boys go out daily to public schools. They live a family lifestyle and gain legal support from FREELAVA. Intended as a ‘Preparation for productive life’,<sup>60</sup> the shelter’s reputation is such that a prison director told me, ‘It’s good that Balay Pasilungan is there. Some – but not all – can go there as a halfway house and there is a need for more facilities like that.’<sup>61</sup>

In the Protestant NGO, Ahon sa Kalye, good values are believed to be spiritual fruits of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, which is of paramount importance. ‘Devotions’ held each morning are also Bible sharing sessions, with teaching focused on ‘discipleship’.<sup>62</sup> Boys attend local church services and midweek activities for young people in the church.<sup>63</sup> Spiritual teaching is integrated into a model of Christian home life, creating an open facility that incorporates freedom and trust, with guidance constantly available, even after boys have left the Grace Home.<sup>64</sup> Residents are sometimes taken to the cinema or the shopping mall, where they can wander in pairs before rejoining the leaders.<sup>65</sup> Youths go to college and to work, guided and cared for by

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<sup>58</sup> See 4.2.2.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with FREELAVA officer, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>60</sup> Balay Pasilungan Information leaflet, 2/2008.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Executive Director, Cebu City Commission for the Welfare and Protection of Children (CCCWPC), 22/02/2008.

<sup>62</sup> See 4.2.1.b)

<sup>63</sup> See 4.2.1.b)

<sup>64</sup> See 4.2.1.c).

<sup>65</sup> See 4.2.1.c)

adults who are constantly available in person or by phone.<sup>66</sup>

The religion and spirituality taught to these boys emphasises conversion to Jesus Christ, salvation, personal commitment and discipleship.<sup>67</sup> Deliberately counteracting ‘the common thinking’ of ‘the acceptable sequence of stealing followed by confession and forgiveness, then stealing again,’<sup>68</sup> leaders encourage a spiritual process that requires repenting of sin and acknowledging Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, leading to redemption and a ‘clean slate’ from which to start leading a new life.<sup>69</sup>

Teaching is geared towards ‘discipleship’ (becoming a follower of Jesus) and is based on the life and teaching of Jesus, with whom each individual can build a personal relationship. There is emphasis on divine guidance in decision-making and on following a lifestyle that avoids sin and is acceptable to God.<sup>70</sup> Adults pray for boys, and with them, individually, and teach them to pray. Advice and counselling about personal problems is done in a pastoral fashion with spiritual teaching at the core.<sup>71</sup>

In contrast to my observations in prisons, it was clear that staff members in rehabilitation centres had faith that boys can change and were adamant that they have seen these

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with staff member, Grace Home, 15/2/2008.

<sup>67</sup> See 4.2.1.b).

<sup>68</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 17/2/2008.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 18/2/2008.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

changes for themselves.<sup>72</sup> They also believed that spiritual transformation is essential to lasting change and supported this response with examples.<sup>73</sup> In all the RRCY and NGO rehabilitation centres, boys spoke of their spiritual growth, hope for the future and the differences they were experiencing in their lives. They openly and voluntarily talked about God and the spiritual changes in their lives. Signs of transformation are also in the changes in mindset and lifestyle that were evident in many quotes from boys and staff members and in my observation of their behaviour.<sup>74</sup>

Alex, aged 16, had left PREDA five months before my visit to his home, after staying three years. He had finished school, had not found permanent work, but sometimes got ‘casual labouring work of one sort or another’.<sup>75</sup> Alex said his time at PREDA had helped him a lot. Asked how she thought he had changed, his mother said, ‘He used to go out on the streets with his friends without asking me. Now he stays at home and helps with the house chores and when he can find work he earns some money to help to feed the family.’<sup>76</sup> Both Alex and his sister looked clean and healthy.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> See 4.4.a).

<sup>73</sup> See 4.4.d).

<sup>74</sup> For instance, see 4.4.b).

<sup>75</sup> Interview with PREDA ex-resident and family, 12/2/2008.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with PREDA ex-resident and family, 12/2/2008.

<sup>77</sup> Field notes, 12/2/2008. Since this was an unscheduled visit, the respondents had no warning of the questions.



## Aftercare

After release, children are monitored by the DSWD. In RRCY programmes, aftercare and follow-up are achieved by means of a ‘livelihood programme, educational assistance and parental seminars’.<sup>78</sup> The aim is for boys to sustain what they have acquired in the centre so that, after leaving, they can finish school and learn a trade.<sup>79</sup>

The leaders and houseparents of Ahon sa Kalye keep in constant contact with boys who have left.<sup>80</sup> These youths keep calling and coming back for reassurance and support, ‘for security purposes as well as older brother figure.’<sup>81</sup> This perpetuates, for both past and present residents, the idea of being part of a family, in which it is customary for children who have grown up and left home to visit regularly. The leaders keep in contact with the first two boys they took in. One was living at home with his family; the other, jailed at 13 years and transferred to Ahon sa Kalye at 15, was, at 19, staying in a Christian foster home and still attending school.<sup>82</sup>

## Subsection summary

This subsection outlined the nature of *pro-transformative action* by describing ways in which leaders of both governmental and NGO rehabilitation centres intentionally guide

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<sup>78</sup> See 4.1.4.c).

<sup>79</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 5/3/2008.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

boys from the state of *alienation* in which they generally arrive, through a period of *awakening* and facilitate them towards a state of lasting change, termed *transformation*. It identified and enlarged upon the components of programmes that enable this transformation to take place, under the four headings: Legal support, Therapeutic care, Towards normality and Changing mindset. It described how these are carried out in the various programmes and demonstrated that spiritual teaching is effective when done within the context of appropriate physical, emotional and community care.

### **5.1.2. Counter-transformative action**

Just as there are positive circumstances and proactive programme components that comprise *pro-transformative action*, similarly there are negative circumstances and counteractive influences that can hinder positive spiritual change. Whilst appropriate intervention encourages boys who are *awakening* spiritually to develop and sustain changes of mindset and be motivated to lead a different lifestyle, inappropriate action can obstruct progress towards permanent transformation and catalyse reversion to the old way of life. This thesis argues that negative aspects of life in jail counteract spiritual development, hindering the ability of young prisoners to move on spiritually from the *awakening* stage even when they have reached a sense of awareness. This negative effect is named *counter-transformative action* because circumstances of a boy's life that work in opposition to the desire for positive change *counteract* the experience of *awakening* and discourage *spiritual transformation*.

This subsection analyses the features of this *counter-transformative action*. It examines the questions: what can make boys stand still or regress, what can be a barrier to their

progress, so that, despite experiences of brutality, neglect and incarceration and, despite knowing that this is not the life they want, they re-offend and return to jail again and again? Essentially, what stops them from making lasting positive changes to their lives?

The following negative factors have been identified from a detailed study of the field research data:

- a) Insufficient spiritual teaching
- b) Opposing values
- c) Lack of opportunity to practise
- d) Basic needs not met
- e) Inappropriate discipline
- f) Unsuitable living environment
- g) Boredom
- h) Hopelessness
- i) Negative perception of children by staff members
- j) Retardation
- k) Isolation from family
- l) No reconciliation or preparation of family
- m) No aftercare or follow-up
- n) Lack of guidance

These 14 factors form the subheadings for this analysis and discussion.

***a) Insufficient spiritual teaching***

An experienced RRCY leader told me: ‘I have observed the rest of the government programmes are not effective if no attention is given to the spiritual.’<sup>83</sup> A NGO leader said: ‘Most boys are from nominally Catholic homes and may have gone to church occasionally, but have had no feeding or discipleship.’<sup>84</sup> These boys have generally had no teaching or example set in the home regarding spiritual values, God, prayer, church doctrine or Bible teaching.<sup>85</sup> They have not been taught about respect for themselves or for other people or their property, about loving relationships, socially acceptable behaviour, peaceful conflict resolution or anger management.<sup>86</sup>

Spiritual teaching in jails is limited to little more than occasional ‘values formation’ sessions with a priest. Some boys interviewed in jail knew the pastor’s basic lessons well enough to recite: ‘To pray and behave well’, ‘Do good’, ‘Be obedient to the guards and houseparent’, ‘Respect for our parents and each other’, ‘Not to fight or box each other.’<sup>87</sup> However, this seems insufficient to enable them to put the teaching into practice:

Don Bosco Home conducts Mass every Sunday for the children. It is doubtful whether some boys are sincere in their repentance because they seem receptive and serious during Mass but afterwards start to quarrel. I think it is good to conduct individual

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<sup>83</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>85</sup> Interview with a staff member, Patin-ay RRCY, 27/2/2008.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

spiritual counselling but we're not doing it.<sup>88</sup>

Spiritual teaching is infrequent and may not relate to the boys' lives. It is not a daily practice which allows them to reflect and relate it to their peer relationships in group 'Bible sharing' sessions or individual counselling. It is not portrayed by the adults appointed to care for them in a manner that enables them to see how to put the teaching into practice.

***b) Opposing values***

Although boys remember what the priest teaches, other factors counteract the teaching to such an extent that they cannot practise and sustain the lessons. Different values, based on bullying and violence, are manifested by supervising adults, who employ brutality and torture and give them orders to bash one another.<sup>89</sup> The example set is in direct opposition to the teaching about the love of God, respect for authority, caring for one another or non-violent conflict-solving. Physical abuse and degrading punishments promote the gang culture and the habit of boys bullying others.<sup>90</sup> Where bullying is positively encouraged by adults, every boy has to prioritise his own survival needs above the needs of his peers. The behaviour modelled by adults and peers is inconsistent with and counteracts the spiritual teaching.

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>89</sup> See 3.2.2.

<sup>90</sup> See 4.2.3.

***c) Lack of opportunity to practise***

Due to this ethos of violence, boys develop self-centred toughness in order to survive. They have little opportunity to practise the values formation lessons, which do not relate to their everyday lives. Fighting, quarrelling and destructive behaviour become the norm and, if shown no respect by the staff, boys show no respect to people or to property. Their bitterness and anger turn to aggression and self-harm.<sup>91</sup> Their thoughts focus on attempting to escape rather than on how they might be able to improve their lives by reflecting upon the spiritual teaching.<sup>92</sup> No programme components offer opportunities to practise moral values or even to live a ‘normal’ life.

***d) Basic needs not met***

In jails, food rations are limited in quantity and quality. At one location, it was suggested that, due to corruption amongst officials, a small fraction of the already meagre allocation from government is spent on food for prisoners.<sup>93</sup> The physical needs of the boys are not met. Many boys told me how they had suffered in prison: ‘because in jail I couldn’t see the sunlight. My body felt weak; there was no good food to eat.’<sup>94</sup> A jail is not a safe shelter: it often lacks adequate, clean beds, sanitary or washing facilities or opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Boys contract lung diseases and skin complaints

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with a staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

<sup>92</sup> See 3.1.3.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with a priest, 5/3/2008.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

and sustain cuts, bruises and burns and there is inadequate health care.<sup>95</sup>

The boys' emotional, social and psychological needs are not met in the jail situation.

Social intercourse and education are neglected.<sup>96</sup> Boys suffer abuse, exploitation and neglect and have no-one to turn to when they are ill, distressed, bereaved or depressed.<sup>97</sup>

There is no counselling or psychotherapy; no-one is available to listen to their hardships, fears or hopes, to encourage them when they are disheartened or to teach them how to rise above their present situation. Consequently, many resort to destructive and self-harming behaviour as the only release they can find for their feelings: 'A councillor provided some musical instruments, but they broke them all. They have even broken the fluorescent lights, toilet bowls and showers.'<sup>98</sup>

*e) Inappropriate discipline*

In all institutions, there are rules to be kept and repercussions for those who break them. Whereas non-violent measures coupled with guidance and counselling are employed in rehabilitation centres, in the jails rule-breaking incidents incur further violence or torture:

When they did wrong, boys were handcuffed behind their back and bashed with fists. If they retaliated they were electrified. Or they had to stand up so that the ants could

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<sup>95</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

bite you. Or swim in the fish pond with dirty water from the hospital.<sup>99</sup>

Whilst it might on occasion be possible to practise self-restraint out of fear of the consequences, in this kind of regime it is hardly possible to learn the value of self-discipline. Because of the inherent lack of justice, there is no consistent basis for knowing what behaviour is acceptable and what is unacceptable.

***f) Unsuitable living environment***

Two of the jails visited were huge concrete structures with stark corridors, barred cells and internal gates and bare floors.<sup>100</sup> The third was a small concrete building with barred cells, bare floors and a bare compound for cooking and eating.<sup>101</sup> In the fourth, minors were locked up almost all day in a small barred cell, one in a row of cells surrounding a compound, like cages in a zoo.<sup>102</sup> There was none of the homeliness of the rehabilitation centres, which all had simple but adequately comfortable buildings that let in the light and had open doors and were generally designed to serve as suitable premises for the simulated family life the centres sought to create.

***g) Boredom***

In contrast with the wealth of opportunities for constructive activity in rehabilitation centres, it was evident in the jails that boys suffered from extreme boredom due to

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<sup>99</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>100</sup> Field notes, 12/2/2008 and 22/2/2008.

<sup>101</sup> Field notes, 25/2/2008.

<sup>102</sup> Field notes, 5/3/2008.



insufficient activities, a lack of routine, no stimulation and no education or training. In one jail, boys were allowed out of their small cell for just 30 minutes a day from 6 a.m. to play basketball; they reported that they sleep or ‘do nothing’ all day.<sup>103</sup> The conduct of boys in another jail illustrates some effects of boredom:

The boys need to be active to prevent boredom and the problems that brings with it. If you don’t have activities, boys quarrel or try to slash their wrists and make graphics with their own blood. It requires the co-operation of everyone to conduct more activities. They are building a basketball court but just two basketball rings is not enough for everyone to play. Boys like physical activities and dancing and music.<sup>104</sup>

#### *h) Hopelessness*

Children in jails are not only afraid and bored; they also suffer from the constant noise and fighting: ‘In jail it was noisy with lots of quarrelling and it was troublesome.’<sup>105</sup> ‘I thought I would die there in prison because there was so much quarrelling and problems.’<sup>106</sup> In the absence of a set programme, the main activity is fighting and, as I heard from a boy in a NGO centre, this has a lasting effect on their attitudes: ‘boys adopted an attitude from jail that they make newcomers subordinate. They bully new boys, steal their tooth-brushes, kick them while sleeping.’<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>105</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>106</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 4/2/2008.

Many staff members in rehabilitation centres told me about the difficult conduct of boys imprisoned for a long time. The lack of a structured programme in the jails affords opportunities for boys to learn unhealthy habits, which bring them no happiness: ‘In prison I learnt lots of vices that I shouldn’t have learnt. I was hopeless.’<sup>108</sup> Chito, rescued from a jail that I had visited, said, ‘the only thing I learnt there was how to smoke.’<sup>109</sup>

*i) Negative perception of children by staff members*

Field and interview data show a marked contrast between the attitudes of staff members in jails from those in rehabilitation centres. Adults in the centres admitted that boys were ‘difficult to handle’ because they had become hardened by life on the streets and in jail, but they focused on the care required due to former neglect and ill-treatment and on the positive change that occurs when good care is given. In jails, however, none of this positive side was voiced. Staff members said that boys were destructive and disobedient and did not appreciate anything that was done for them.<sup>110</sup>

These adults disapproved of changes brought in by RA9344, particularly the lowering of the age of criminal responsibility, believing that boys knew what they were doing and deserved to be punished.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>109</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with staff member, Tahanan ng Kabataan, 25/2/2008.

<sup>111</sup> Interview with staff member, CCOSCC, 22/2/2008.

Even when their job titles had changed from ‘prison warder’ to ‘houseparent’, these staff members continued to wear the uniform and behave in the same manner as previously, so that, in reality, there was no change.<sup>112</sup> This resonates with Ungar’s view that:

When troubled youth do not fit with the expectations placed upon them, their behaviour results in stigmatization, placement, incarceration, treatment and most often, exclusion. Such youth may or may not need help, but too frequently we prefer to train, correct, supervise, and control rather than understand.<sup>113</sup>

When caregivers ‘participate in the construction of problem-saturated identities’, this impedes the healthy development of children.<sup>114</sup>

#### ***j) Retardation***

Youngsters in jail grow older but not, necessarily, more mature. Deprivation and violence can cause lasting damage: ‘Karl was in prison for nine years and was transferred to this centre two months ago. He tried to join in the dancing on stage, but he was skinny and awkward and gave the impression of being a damaged young man.’<sup>115</sup>

Some imprisoned boys told me that they had never had any education or training; others had just a little basic literacy teaching from Manpower Training in jail.<sup>116</sup> These boys are not prepared for integration into society, to set up home or to obtain employment. If they

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<sup>112</sup> Field notes, 22/2/2008.

<sup>113</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 14.

<sup>114</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 6.

<sup>115</sup> Field notes, 26/2/2008.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with a boy, Butuan Provincial Jail, 5/3/2008.

are released, they go back onto the streets where they seek out old friends and revert to their old lifestyle, which is the only way they know to survive. They learn more harmful conduct, leading to further conflict with the law and recommitment to jail.

***k) Isolation from family***

When asked, ‘What do you miss from outside?’ boys offered replies such as:

‘my family’, ‘my Grandmother’, ‘my peers’, ‘girlfriends’, ‘basketball’, ‘I miss playing with my brothers.’<sup>117</sup> Family is central to Filipino life and even boys who have suffered neglect and have run away from home may long to see their families again. Prison isolates them from their parents, grandparents and siblings, who often cannot afford to visit even when they know where they are held. A boy telling of his prison experience said: ‘My parents had no money. I wasn’t allowed to go home when my father died.’<sup>118</sup>

***l) No family reconciliation or preparation***

In jail, there is no model of family life: ‘boys cannot claim houseparents as their own because there are only two.’<sup>119</sup> Consequently, children do not learn how to live peaceably in a family. The jails offer neither family therapy to allow a boy to be truly reconciled with his family nor preparation for the family and community to receive him when he is released. If he goes home to a family life that is no better than before, he is unlikely to stay and, if he does stay at home, there can still be trouble:

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<sup>117</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Balay Pasilungan, 20/2/2008.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

Sometimes the parents push them to the streets to do this or that thing because they lack food. At one time (before he went to Ahon sa Kalye) his mother encouraged him to steal food from a small store.<sup>120</sup>

In centres, care and attention is given to family life, even after boys have left: ‘He says he is not ready to get married because of uncertainties regarding his own family. He is living in his parents’ house, but they do not like the girl he loves.’<sup>121</sup> There was no evidence of this work with families in any of the jails visited.

***m) No aftercare or follow-up***

Boys leave jail, but soon return:

Some offenders have come in and out of Operation Second Chance more than once. Our dream was to provide a genuine rehabilitation facility but we failed there because they keep coming back. You cannot just release a child and say, ‘Go.’ You have to follow this kid.<sup>122</sup>

Sometimes, this problem was blamed on the lack of government social workers:

We have only two social workers so it is hard to visit all the parents. Children come from a wide area, some even outside the city. There is a great shortage of social workers. The University has phased out social work courses because there were too few applicants. It is difficult to encourage people to take up the work, which is poorly paid and stressful. They need support and status. Sometimes children of social workers become CICL, maybe because the mother is out of house all the time, even during the

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

night [nearly all social workers are women].<sup>123</sup>

#### ***n) Lack of guidance***

The boys themselves knew they needed help. In conversation with a boy and his NGO programme leader, I learned: ‘He got into a cycle of jail, rehabilitation, more jail, usually for fighting with other kids on the street. He has been in jail more times than he can count.’ I asked the boy why going to jail did not stop him from re-offending and he replied, ‘because nobody is guiding us. I could do whatever I wanted because nobody was guiding me.’<sup>124</sup>

Local church members, who go out to talk to kids on the street, had found this lad. He joined them at a Youth Camp and ‘accepted Jesus as Saviour’, but after this, there was no shelter for him so he went back on the streets.<sup>125</sup> Later, he was arrested and jailed. After spiritual *awakening*, he had regressed to his former lifestyle.

#### **Subsection summary**

When a boy has begun to awaken spiritually, it is possible for circumstances or events to work against his spiritual development, so that he regresses and his sense of alienation is intensified. In jails based on the *Containment* model, the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of boys are not met and, in these conditions, the short time of spiritual

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<sup>123</sup> Interview with Executive Director, CCCWPC, 22/02/2008.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with a boy, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

and values formation teaching offered by visiting priests or groups is divorced from real life experience. It may seem irrelevant or of little importance when boys' thoughts are occupied by hunger, fear and desire to escape. As Crompton says, 'Spiritual wellbeing is inseparable from cognitive, emotional, physical and social wellbeing. If one aspect is neglected or harmed, the whole person is impaired. Spiritual distress can result from, or underlie, more visible patterns of behaviour.'<sup>126</sup>

Spiritual and moral teaching is set against a background of opposing values; negative factors counteract the teaching so that boys cannot practise and hold fast to what they have heard. Since they are not shown respect, they learn that they are worthless, regardless of the priest's teaching that they are all worthy of the love of God. If physically abused and told to hit one another, they learn that violence is the norm and necessary for survival, despite Bible teaching about love, kindness and peacemaking. They lose touch with their families and there is no semblance of family life offered. Incarcerated in buildings that are harsh or squalid, threatening or depressing, they do not learn social behaviour that will help them to integrate with normal society when they leave the jail. They have no guidance, aftercare or follow-up when they leave.

Boys released from jail generally return to street life, with all its dangers and hardships, because they have not internalised the spiritual teaching or learnt how to establish an alternative lifestyle. Having acquired no education or vocational skills, they have no means of survival except by illegal means; they are at risk of coming into conflict with

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<sup>126</sup> Crompton, 'Working with children', 84.

the law and being jailed again, increasingly trapped in a cycle of recidivism. Any *awakening* they may have experienced is likely to be lost. They become hardened in attitude and can revert to a state of *alienation* from God, from their families and from society, exacerbated by the stigmatisation and rejection of the authorities and of the general population. The jail sentence has not equipped the boys to make the lasting changes in their lives that would enable them to become spiritually transformed.

Although this section presents a marked difference between conditions in rehabilitation centres and those in the jails, any interpretation of the data must take into account the limitations arising from its collection in a small sample of establishments in a short time frame. In a more comprehensive study, the situation might be found to be less clear-cut: there may be occasions when certain helpful features are lacking in a good centre or times when a boy finds, during his time in jail, someone or something that leads to a transforming experience. This limitation does not detract from the central finding of this study that processes of spiritual transformation are aided by specific features of appropriate rehabilitation programmes and hindered by negative features of jail life.

### **Section conclusion**

The question, 'Is spiritual transformation essential to lasting change?' brought a positive response in the rehabilitation centres. A religious teacher recollected an institution he used to visit in Manila, where boys were just following rules, but he pointed out that



there will be no such rules when they are integrated into the community.<sup>127</sup> He expounded:

There is a paradigm first of spiritual things before real change. If no spiritual change is happening inside the institution, their lives will change inside the institution because of the rules, but when they go home they will go back to the old ways because there is no 'values formation' and they will be influenced by home. Change won't happen even if they are integrated to their own homes. If a boy has experienced spiritual change, he will influence his brothers and sisters and will change the neighbourhood, the whole community, the province, the world! Values formation and spiritual change is essential; he will be touched by it and will practise it still.<sup>128</sup>

Spiritual change is often seen as a transformation that is brought about by divine grace as well as by human intervention. Asked whether he thought a boy could experience spiritual change even if he had no desire to change, the teacher replied:

Yes. I believe the Spirit will change him. I see gradual change. Spiritual change is by the grace of God. The Spirit moves to change the person. Grace will come from God and the staff will be the instrument for the spiritual. Transformation comes from the Supreme Being.<sup>129</sup>

In this thesis, *recognition* is defined as 'the state of recognising that there are essential differences in the new way of life that the boys currently experience and that, due to

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<sup>127</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

these differences, they now feel better than previously.’<sup>130</sup> This recognition comprises: a) joy in finding physical comfort when basic needs are met, b) enjoyment of ‘a normal life’ and a form of ‘family life’, with the unconditional love of parent figures who guide and care for them and teach them self-care and c) the satisfaction of acquiring useful survival and vocational skills.

Boys see how they can use these skills ‘to extend their current way of life, which they find preferable to the old one, and make it a permanent feature of their future independent lives.’<sup>131</sup> Since the process is largely experiential, it clearly requires the provision of these elements of a different way of life. Boys experience it, appreciate its advantages and gradually perceive how they can appropriate and claim it for themselves.

### **Section conclusion**

It has been shown that details of rehabilitation programme components, and the manner in which they are delivered, differ in each centre. The term *Developing Trust* has been coined in this thesis to summarise the approach favoured as a result of the research findings. However, the principles are similar in each rehabilitation programme and each appears to be achieving its purpose, since boys displaying characteristics indicative of a state of *spiritual transformation* were found in (and graduated from) all these centres.

A basic grounding of spiritual teaching backed up by love, respect and care in everyday

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<sup>130</sup> See 4.3.

<sup>131</sup> See 4.3.

life and coupled with careful management of a boy's holistic needs (physical, emotional, social, educational, vocational and moral) enables him to grasp, internalise and act upon the teaching. New ways of thinking become his normal reaction to situations, leading to greater maturity, an increased ability to cope with life and a sense of purpose and confidence that realistic goals can be achieved.

Lasting change cannot be achieved in a hurry. A significant period of time (normally about six months to two years) is devoted to the rehabilitation programme. Many boys need extensive practice to learn how to behave in a 'new skin'. Transformation is gradual and not necessarily on a smooth gradient. There may or may not be 'conversion' moments when there is a sudden awakening. Boys have many questions to ask and they have doubts, problems and resistance to change and to authority. This takes patience on the part of staff members and consistency in treatment of all boys by all adults.

The major differences between spiritual teaching in the jails and spiritual teaching in the rehabilitation centres are:

- frequency
- quantity
- centrality
- relevance
- integration
- consistency
- time scale
- emphasis

- participation
- safe environment
- example of love, forgiveness, morality, respect, self-respect and care for the environment
- experience of being loved, wanted, respected and liked
- routine – prayers, grace, Bible reading, Mass – normal events in which everyone takes part
- empowerment, teaching about human rights and personal development.

The process of spiritual change is facilitated when learning about God and experiencing love, life, beauty and forgiveness are integrated into the total programme and, thus, into the lives of individual boys.

In rehabilitation programmes, boys begin to ‘awake’ to the possibilities ahead of them. They experience glimpses of hope for their future. They develop different attitudes about authority, society and work and begin to plan for when they leave the centre. Life now has meaning and boys have a sense of purpose. Their spiritual transformation is so integrated in the person that it is inseparable from personal changes in emotional wholeness, psychological and physical health, physique, fitness, literacy, educational achievement and basic and social skills. Underlying this new strength is a new sense of identity, self-esteem, confidence and personal power, based on frequent encouragement and proven ability in many areas of life.

Research has shown that, in various ways, religious belief and practice is influenced by

family and peer friendships and groups.<sup>132</sup> Nicholas Shepherd found that adolescents ‘develop a habitus of faith through socialisation’, but say they have made a personal choice in the matter of faith.<sup>133</sup> They believe that God is ‘there for them’, in a personal relationship, to be spoken to in times of difficulty, for guidance, comfort and support.<sup>134</sup> Some boys in this study had already established a local faith habitus.<sup>135</sup> Others return home to slum areas, where life may be no easier than before. They may not attend Mass as they live in families that largely ignore the church. However, they understand God as a reality in their lives, one who wants them to respect themselves and others and who can be called upon for help when necessary: ‘Most of all I can’t forget how God loves me.’<sup>136</sup> Rehabilitated into the community, they have a greater sense of responsibility within the family and will seek work where they can in order to make a contribution.<sup>137</sup>

This description of the transformation process depicts the ideal, successful rehabilitation. Multiple factors combine to make up this ‘whole picture’ and for many boys some pieces may remain missing or damaged for the rest of their lives. However, this thesis argues that, when a rehabilitation programme is carefully constructed in order to create an environment that is conducive to faith development, spiritual transformation can take

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<sup>132</sup> Kelly Dean Schwartz, ‘Transformations in Parent and Friend Faith Support Predicting Adolescents’ Religious Faith’, *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 16, no. 4 (2006): 311-326.

<sup>133</sup> Nicholas Shepherd, ‘Religious Socialisation and a Reflexive Habitus’ in Collins-Mayo, Sylvia and Pink Dandelion, eds. *Religion and Youth*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 152.

<sup>134</sup> Shepherd, ‘Religious Socialisation and a Reflexive Habitus’, 153.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with a staff member, Grace Home, 16/2/2008.

<sup>136</sup> See 4.4.e).

<sup>137</sup> Interview with PREDA ex-resident and family, 12/2/2008.

place in the life of individual young persons who have previously been imprisoned.

The next section reflects upon the academic theory drawn upon for this thesis.

## **5.2. Theoretical reflections**

### **Introduction**

This section reflects upon the relevance of this study for the major areas of scholarship upon which it has drawn, in the fields of spirituality and faith development. 5.2.1. reviews how the research relates to the broad definition of spirituality outlined in Chapter One. 5.2.2. considers the relationship between this research and faith development theory. The section concludes by highlighting the distinctiveness of the new model developed in this thesis.

### **5.2.1. Reflections upon spirituality theory**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter One drew extensively on previous research in the field of spirituality and religion in order to define terms and situate the current study.<sup>138</sup> The views expressed were summarised as ‘spirituality is not the same as religion; spirituality is individual, whereas religion is corporate and institutional; spirituality is found in subjective life, whereas religion is directed towards the transcendent; spirituality is the concern of everyone, whilst religion is confined to an elite membership group; spirituality is

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<sup>138</sup> See 1.1.

focused on the ordinary person's everyday life, whereas religion makes use of externals such as texts, doctrines and belief.<sup>139</sup>

The works cited in that discussion relate to Christianity in the contemporary western world.<sup>140</sup> This research is based in the South-east Asian country of the Philippines, where the culture has strong roots in Roman Catholicism.<sup>141</sup> Nine of the institutions visited during fieldwork were explicitly or implicitly Roman Catholic and the tenth was a Protestant NGO. Given the boys' age and social background and the culture of their society, Christian teaching seems appropriate to assist their sense of cultural identity and re-integration. Nevertheless, this thesis has taken a holistic view of spirituality, which places religious practice and relationship to the transcendent alongside personal well-being in everyday life, supported by many ordinary activities.<sup>142</sup> Data gained from field observation yield much that relates to religion and to personal spirituality. Both are embraced by boys and staff members as a means of activating inner change.

### *Religion*

This thesis regards religion as one constituent that nurtures spiritual transformation. Since rehabilitation centres are generally institutions it is unsurprising that they embrace

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<sup>139</sup> See 1.1.1.

<sup>140</sup> See 1.1. fn 3.

<sup>141</sup> See 1.2.2.

<sup>142</sup> See 1.1.1. The term 'spiritual' is defined as: the range of ways in which humankind makes or finds purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, self, others and the natural world.

‘institutionalised’ forms of religion, which are also a component of school curricula in the Philippines. Religious teaching and practice are important components of all the rehabilitation programmes. They support moral education and values formation and are often integrated with human rights education, personal growth training, counselling and behaviour modification.

Religious activities are used to promote integration with society, socially acceptable behaviour and creative recreation. Through sharing thoughts about Bible stories, boys learn important lessons about loving one’s neighbours and enemies, caring for victims of injustice and being honest and truthful. Religious practice, such as saying prayers and grace and attending Church, is incorporated into programmes in the same way as vocational training, personal hygiene and other practices. Boys thereby learn about the nature of God and the possibility of relationship with God.<sup>143</sup>

### *Spirituality*

This section shows how the data support the definition proposed in Chapter One, where the term ‘spiritual’ is not confined to religious belief or practice, but rather: ‘involves finding meaning and purpose both subjectively and in connection with the world, in the context of relationship with the divine spirit.’<sup>144</sup> The broad holistic definition of spirituality adopted in this thesis was affirmed in the research field by a sense of spirituality that exceeds institution or formality. Observed spirituality incorporated the

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<sup>143</sup> See, for example 4.1.3.b)

<sup>144</sup> See 1.1.



spectrum of personal relationships and emotional, physical, psychological, intellectual and recreational aspects of human life. In Sheldrake's words, this spirituality relates to 'the deepest values and meanings by which people seek to live' and implies a 'vision of the human spirit and of what will assist it to achieve its full potential.'<sup>145</sup> In the context of rehabilitation programmes, this assistance is provided by activities that promote 'fitness, healthy living, and holistic well-being'.<sup>146</sup>

Ways in which spirituality is 'nurtured by activities that focus attention on the individual and the internal self'<sup>147</sup> are evident throughout the data.<sup>148</sup> Riis and Woodhead have demonstrated that 'emotion plays a part in spiritual life'.<sup>149</sup> Centres employ psycho-therapists and some conduct 'psycho-spiritual therapy',<sup>150</sup> but there is no evidence that emotion or personal intuition is regarded as sacred, as the 'authoritative voice' of an 'inner spiritual guide' or 'god within'.<sup>151</sup> Rather, it is seen as an integral part of holistic well-being: 'Through intensive work by the Center's spiritual formator, their faith is reconfirmed. The psycho-spiritual technique helps them to discover their inner selves and enhance spirituality.'<sup>152</sup> Spiritual growth is nurtured by physical, emotional and

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<sup>145</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 1.

<sup>146</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 1.

<sup>147</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 13.

<sup>148</sup> For instance, see 4.2.3.a) iii).

<sup>149</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

<sup>150</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

<sup>151</sup> Riis and Woodhead, *A Sociology of Religious Emotion*, 162.

<sup>152</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

psychological healing. The ‘vision of the human spirit’<sup>153</sup> underlying the work is that the boys are innately good, created in God’s image and, if provided with a suitable environment, able to develop a sense of self-worth and dignity.<sup>154</sup>

In rehabilitation establishments, it was assumed that spirituality and religion go together: religion is a fundamental feature of the life of Filipino adults, even if they do not attend Mass regularly.<sup>155</sup> Often, staff members, when asked about spiritual aspects of the programme, first mentioned teaching by the priest or saying prayers; boys also talked about these. There was an underlying assumption that prayers are said, that the Bible contains moral teaching, that God is good and that Christianity is the best way of life.<sup>156</sup>

However, a staff member explicated that he was advised by the NGO leader to take a liberal view when teaching, starting from the lives of the boys.<sup>157</sup> He used activities to enhance the boys’ self-esteem and show them how to live peaceably.<sup>158</sup> Teaching contained direct reference to their lives and conduct. God was shown as loving, caring about them as individuals, able to guide and protect, but also as moral, expecting them to behave well towards others and to look to God for guidance. This was not a rigid, exclusive religiosity: alongside ‘religion’ were found many elements of holistic

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<sup>153</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 1

<sup>154</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008. See also 4.2.3.b) iv).

<sup>155</sup> See 1.2.2.

<sup>156</sup> See, for instance, 4.2.1.b)

<sup>157</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008. See 5.1.1.

<sup>158</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008. See 5.1.1.

spirituality, such as emotional therapy, recreation, discussion, retreats and human rights teaching. There was awareness that religious teaching goes hand-in-hand with fulfilment of physical, emotional and psychological needs. Together these engender wholeness and integration.<sup>159</sup>

In the non-conformist Protestant programme, there are fewer set prayers or other religious forms, but there is emphasis on Bible teaching, personal prayer and Christian discipleship, which ‘is reducible neither to devotional practices nor to some abstract framework of beliefs’, but ‘is a complete way of life.’<sup>160</sup> Belief is important and teaching is evangelical, taking the Bible as truth and believing in the need for personal commitment to Jesus Christ, for salvation and the strength to live a good life. Nevertheless, the programme is set firmly in everyday life, with attention to the diverse needs of the boys, from education and training to haircuts and shopping trips.<sup>161</sup>

Adolescent boys, especially those whose development has been retarded, need concrete, active learning programmes. They are also capable of abstract thought, which can be developed by means of patient teaching that employs visual aids, repetition, interactive learning, discussion and reflection.

The research findings are supported by previous scholarship in relation to spiritual

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<sup>159</sup> See, for instance, 4.1.3.b)

<sup>160</sup> Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality*, 193.

<sup>161</sup> See 4.2.1.b)

transformation, such as Rosalind Pearmain's study of 'transformational experiences in young people'.<sup>162</sup> She sought to identify what adolescents 'find meaningful in their exposure to spiritual education organised by religious or spiritual institutions.'<sup>163</sup> Two central themes emerged: 'safe haven' and 'transforming processes'. These two themes resonate with components identified in this thesis as being pertinent to spiritual transformation.<sup>164</sup> Significant aspects found by Pearmain to contribute to the experience of a 'safe haven' were 'threshold' (welcome, inclusion, acceptance and non-judgement), 'opportunities for feeling free and safe' (sharing in small groups, fun and games, spiritual space for reflection, integration, depth of being, connection, sense of freedom and spontaneous expression) and 'community structures' (firm ground rules, shared values, consistency of structure over time, sense of belonging in a group/community).<sup>165</sup> Experience of a safe haven is fundamental to the concepts of *Boundaried Care* and *Developing Trust* models, as opposed to the *Containment* model.<sup>166</sup>

The 'transforming processes' emerging from Pearmain's analysis include: integrating a sense of self, time for reflection and feedback, affective and spiritual education, intense affective experiences, intense stimulation, social world expanding, meeting diversity,

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<sup>162</sup> Rosalind Pearmain, 'Transformational experiences in young people: the meaning of a safe haven', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 10, no. 3 (2005), 277–290.

<sup>163</sup> Pearmain, 'Transformational experiences in young people', 277–290. Pearmain interviewed participants in a Quaker gathering and in a seminar of the Sahaj Marg meditation system in Denmark. 'Sahaj Marg' means 'simple or natural way'.

<sup>164</sup> See 5.1.1.

<sup>165</sup> Pearmain, 'Transformational experiences in young people', 281.

<sup>166</sup> See 1.2.3.

spiritual context and experience, choices and actions, living values, empowerment, relations with others in world and career choices.<sup>167</sup> Though the cultural setting is fundamentally different, these also largely correlate with the benefits that boys derive from an appropriate rehabilitative community experience.

The focus of this thesis on processes of spiritual transformation resonates with the views of Michal Beth Dinkler, who employs the term ‘redemption’ to mean ‘a general restoration to wholeness, healing, and reconciliation – with God, within oneself, and with others – and the transformations necessary for such restoration to occur.’<sup>168</sup> Stories, harnessed to develop faith and promote spiritual transformation ‘help one imagine redemption’ and also ‘cultivate the inner resources necessary to actuate transformation.’<sup>169</sup> Therapeutic community living provides opportunities for boys to tell their stories and hear those of others. Thereby: ‘the teller and hearers discover that they are not alone’ and ‘storytelling in community also expands one's repertoire of possible responses to life by exposing us to others' (successful and failed) strategies for transformation.’<sup>170</sup>

The ‘identifiable bridge between formative and transformative spirituality’ that in

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<sup>167</sup> Pearmain, ‘Transformational experiences in young people’, 281-2.

<sup>168</sup> Michal Beth Dinkler, ‘Telling Transformation: How We Redeem Narratives and Narratives Redeem Us’, *Word & World* 31, no. 3 (2011), 289. ‘Spiritual transformation’ is defined in 1.1.2. as ‘a significant positive development in one’s ability to make or find purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, oneself, others and the natural world.’

<sup>169</sup> Dinkler, ‘Telling Transformation’, 291.

<sup>170</sup> Dinkler, ‘Telling Transformation’, 292.

Christianity ‘directly links the formation of character to spirituality and worship’<sup>171</sup> is exemplified in much of the rehabilitative work described in this thesis.

## **Summary**

Religious practice was reported in all the institutions and observed in several of them. There is also evidence of personal spirituality in the data collected at rehabilitation centres. Religion and spirituality are interdependent and are commensurate with the developmental stage of these adolescent boys. They are assisted by pro-transformative features of the rehabilitation programmes. Thus the broad view of spirituality proposed at the start of this thesis is maintained by the data analysis therein. It forms the basis of the theory development leading to the new model, which is supported by theories of spiritual transformation theory and casts new light upon those theories.<sup>172</sup>

Subsection 5.2.2. discusses faith development theory in the light of this thesis.

### **5.2.2. Reflections upon faith development theory**

#### **Introduction**

This thesis draws upon the scholarship of faith development theory. The data can be explained partially by referring to Fowler’s stages of faith development model and Slee’s theory of women’s faith development. Analysis of the data with reference to these

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<sup>171</sup> Sara Savage, Sylvia Collins-Mayo, Bob Mayo with Graham Cray, *Making Sense of Generation Y: The World View of 15 to 25 Year-olds*, 1st edn. (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), 163.

<sup>172</sup> The new model is depicted in Figure 5.1.

models and using Slee's theory as an initial framework gives rise to a new model that relates to the lives of imprisoned boys. The work of Fowler and Slee, described in 1.2.5., 1.3. and 1.4., is summarised here with appropriate commentary. This is followed by a discussion of the relationship between the models devised by Fowler, Slee and this thesis.

***a) Stage development theory***

Fowler's theory of faith development comprises seven (originally six) sequential, progressive stages from birth to maturity and beyond.<sup>173</sup> These are: 1) Primal Faith, 2) Intuitive-Projective Faith, 3) Mythic-Literal Faith, 4) Synthetic-Conventional Faith, 5) Individuative-Reflective faith, 6) Conjunctive Faith and 7) Universalizing Faith.<sup>174</sup>

At the adolescent stage of development (stage 4), there is an emphasis on self-identity, personal relationships and self-consciousness in seeing oneself as others see us. 'These newly formed personal relations with significant others correlate with a hunger for a personal relationship to God in which we feel ourselves to be known and loved in deep and comprehensive ways.'<sup>175</sup> At this stage, the person 'must form a set of beliefs, values and commitments that provides orientation and courage for living.'<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Outlined in 1.2.5.

<sup>174</sup> All found in Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 31-41.

<sup>175</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

<sup>176</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

Fowler describes faith as ‘a dynamic and generic human experience’ which ‘includes, but is not limited to or identical with, religion.’ Regardless of religious or non-religious upbringing, we share a universal human capacity for faith. That faith incorporates forming ‘relations of trust and loyalty to others’, shaping ‘commitments to causes and *centers of value*’, forming ‘allegiances and alliances with *images and realities of power*’, forming and shaping our lives ‘in relation to *master stories*’ and, thus, joining with others ‘in the finding and making of meaning.’<sup>177</sup> The ‘centers of value’ that ‘promise to give worth and meaning to our lives’ could be family, career, money, power, influence or sexuality but, in ‘virtually all major religious traditions, God or transcendent reality is meant to be the supreme center of value in our lives.’<sup>178</sup> ‘Images and realities of power’, relate to what people align themselves with ‘in order to feel secure in life’.<sup>179</sup>

Fowler asserts that ‘faith is trust in and loyalty to a shared master story or core story’, which often begins in early childhood and gradually becomes ‘more conscious and explicit as something to which we are committed.’<sup>180</sup> It ‘gives direction, courage, and hope to our lives’, providing ‘life-guiding images of the goodness – and the Godness – for which we are made.’ It ‘shapes our consciousness regarding the character of the ultimate power and reality with which we contend, and how we should shape our lives

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<sup>177</sup> Fowler ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 31-32. (Italics in original).

<sup>178</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 32.

<sup>179</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 32.

<sup>180</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 32-33.



with our neighbors in light of that relation.’<sup>181</sup> Fowler concludes that: ‘Faith is an existential orientation formed in our relations with others that links us, in shared trusts and loyalties, to each other, to shared values, and to a transcendent framework of meaning and power.’<sup>182</sup>

*The relationship of this thesis to Fowler’s theory*

This study does not seek to test or replicate the work of Fowler, or to form a stage theory of faith development. It sets out to discover the existence and nature of spiritual transformation in boys brought from imprisonment, to examine the process whereby this takes place and to determine factors that facilitate this transformation. It draws upon Fowler’s theory (in addition to scholarship discussed in 5.2) as a means to discuss some of the data.

This thesis identifies with studies that have found stage theory to be a useful starting point, but partially inadequate to describe spiritual processes.<sup>183</sup> Regarding the nature of faith in its stated context, its findings relate to much of Fowler’s theory in ways that transcend stage theory. Whilst acknowledging Fowler’s theory to be of immense value in its examination of the nature of faith and faith development, it finds a more fluid model to be appropriate for imprisoned boys in the Philippines. Contesting the notion that spiritual transformation can be explained purely by natural, biological development,

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<sup>181</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 33.

<sup>182</sup> Fowler, ‘Stages in Faith Consciousness’, 33.

<sup>183</sup> See, 1.2.5.b) and c).

this research sheds new light upon faith development theory by taking into account the significance of external factors in the form of pro-active input by others in the development of young people and of the inhibiting, even harmful, effect of the lack of this input.

Many boys whom I met in the Philippines might have been, on Fowler's scale, at Stage Four (Synthetic-Conventional faith), at which, from teenager to early adulthood or beyond, they see the world through the lens of the peer community and unconsciously 'catch' faith, values and a way of thinking from the peer group or subculture.<sup>184</sup> These spiritual needs of adolescents were seen to be neglected in jails, but fulfilled in rehabilitation centres, where boys could gain both orientation and courage for living.

Of particular relevance is Fowler's belief that: 'This shaping of a worldview and its values proceeds as adolescents encounter persons and contexts that offer stories, ideals, belief systems, rituals, disciplines and role models that can capture and fund their imaginations and hunger for adult truth.'<sup>185</sup> Evidently, neither suitable role models nor this essential ethos exist for boys on the streets or in prison. Especially when families are not safe places, teens rely upon peer groups to sustain mental health.'<sup>186</sup>

Ungar believes that youth who 'appear to be acting in dangerous and destructive ways',

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<sup>184</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

<sup>185</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 38.

<sup>186</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 30.

do so to survive and ‘their self-chosen identities hide their resilience under the guise of dysfunction.’<sup>187</sup> Moving into a *Developing Trust* centre, the subculture changes radically and much of the worldview of the peer group changes too. Now that, in a sense, youths live in a ‘faith community’, they have the opportunity to ‘catch’ different values, in addition to the explicit teaching.

Whilst imprisoned children develop unhelpful centres of trust and values, many boys in rehabilitation centres learn to trust God in a personal relationship by accepting for themselves the teaching of the Christian church. In addition, they discover reliable centres of value by establishing good family and peer relationships, by training for careers and by learning how to take care of themselves and others.

Imprisoned boys often experience power that is oppressive and destructive.<sup>188</sup> In rehabilitation centres, this is replaced from the outset with appropriate discipline and authority based on mutual respect.<sup>189</sup> Boys are taught that power rests ultimately with God and they can source it through prayer and the sacraments.<sup>190</sup> They learn about human rights, sin, repentance and unconditional love.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 23.

<sup>188</sup> Interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>189</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>190</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>191</sup> See 4.2. and 4.4.

The master stories of imprisoned boys may occasionally have started well enough in the close family into which they were born, but the negative impact of poverty, neglect, abuse and exploitation often take hold in their early years.<sup>192</sup> It is a major task to seek to unravel and reconstruct this aspect of faith so that their lives take on new direction, courage and hope, and to re-shape a boy's consciousness of God and community. A sufficient period of time in an appropriate environment is essential to build a new 'faith master story' that creates permanent guiding images.

Rehabilitation centres offer opportunities for boys to begin the 'dynamic process of construal and commitment' that Fowler describes and to find a focus for their trust, in God and in their new parent-figures. Boys learn where it is most likely to be safe to place their trust and how to trust their own judgement. They grow in self-confidence and develop confidence in centres of value. They are encouraged to form appropriate relationships with adults and their peers and, where possible, to restore relationships with their natural parents and families. In the therapeutic community, boys develop trust and loyalty to one another, to shared values and to 'a transcendent framework of meaning and power',<sup>193</sup> named 'God', or sometimes 'the Lord'.

With regard to Fowler's early stages, Devor suggests that 'images of safety', for boys, 'might arise from a growing sense of individual competency', whereas for girls they

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<sup>192</sup> See 3.2.2.

<sup>193</sup> Fowler, 'Stages in Faith Consciousness', 33.

‘might arise from a sense of relationship’.<sup>194</sup> The data for this study show that imprisoned boys missed out on both these aspects during childhood. Education and training were lacking in the home; school attendance has been brief or non-existent; familial relationships have often been poor, abusive or destructive. Collected data contain many instances where boys, when finally given opportunities to compensate for these early deficiencies, report an enhanced sense of well-being due to ‘learning so much’ and gaining a range of practical efficiencies.<sup>195</sup> They do, however, also exhibit ‘an ethic of care and responsibility’, seen by Devor to be an ethic preferred by girls.<sup>196</sup> Some boys were planning to care for and to teach their siblings.<sup>197</sup>

## **Conclusion**

There is much of value in Fowler’s theory to explain data collected in this research, but the findings of this thesis show that ‘stages of faith development’ are not entirely helpful in developing theory that relates to spiritual transformation. Boys have reached various stages of biological and psychological growth and emotional maturity, but these may have been thwarted or retarded by ill-treatment and neglect.<sup>198</sup> Equally, spiritual development is affected by external factors, which may be beyond a boy’s control. Certain elements must be in place for an alienated child to experience awakening leading

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<sup>194</sup> Devor, ‘Towards a Relational Voice of Faith: Contributions of James Fowler’s Faith Development Theory’, 268-9.

<sup>195</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008. See 4.3.

<sup>196</sup> Devor, ‘Towards a Relational Voice of Faith: Contributions of James Fowler’s Faith Development Theory’, 272.

<sup>197</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008. See 4.3.

<sup>198</sup> See 5.1.2.j).

to transformation, but regression following a phase of spiritual awareness may be brought about by negative external factors.

***b) Slee's theory and its relationship to Fowler's theory.***

Slee examines the work of Fowler and his successors in the field of faith development.<sup>199</sup> She concludes that Fowler's theory is valuable but limited in its usefulness to describe the experience of women because she finds Fowler's stage theory to be too arbitrary, andocentric and inadequate to explain fully the experience of women.<sup>200</sup> Whereas Fowler's theory relies upon theories of *stage development*, Slee focuses on the *nature of faith*, identified as common patterns. From her own research with mature women, she forms a model of women's faith development, of which the major themes are 'alienation', 'awakenings' and 'relationality'.<sup>201</sup>

The participating women were able to own and reflect upon their stories and to narrate the development of their spiritual lives. They were reporting 'history' that they had thought about, reflected upon, analysed and most likely reframed in the light of later experiences. Their stories and approaches to telling their stories were diverse but common threads were drawn out in order to find the main patterns and processes of their spiritual faith development.

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<sup>199</sup> See 1.2.5.b) and 1.3.

<sup>200</sup> See 1.3.

<sup>201</sup> See 1.3.

## *Alienation*

‘Alienation’ for these women, is largely about women’s perception of feeling cut off from the church and from God. It is also about separation from family, feeling invisible in society, being treated unequally or ignored in the workplace. There is evidence of loss of identity, a woman not knowing who she is except in her role, for instance as wife, mother, daughter, carer, nurse, teacher or minister of religion.<sup>202</sup>

Slee describes various experiences of alienation: adolescent crisis,<sup>203</sup> nothingness,<sup>204</sup> silence,<sup>205</sup> abdication and absorption of self,<sup>206</sup> deadness, loss of feeling and reality,<sup>207</sup> disconnection,<sup>208</sup> fragmentation and division, paralysis and impasse,<sup>209</sup> violence against women,<sup>210</sup> and the event of leaving home.<sup>211</sup> Some women’s stories incorporated the notion that this state of alienation, however experienced, brings about a sense of awakening that leads to spiritual transformation, often felt as a sense of ‘belonging’ or ‘coming home’.<sup>212</sup> Thus, experiences of illness, suffering, bereavement or other ‘limit

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<sup>202</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 83.

<sup>203</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 84-85.

<sup>204</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 38, 82-83.

<sup>205</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 67, 83, 86-89, 178-180.

<sup>206</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 100-103.

<sup>207</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 90-92.

<sup>208</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 92-96.

<sup>209</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 96-98.

<sup>210</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 104-105.

<sup>211</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 114-118.

<sup>212</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 121-125.

situations' are seen as a 'gateway to new awakening to self and spiritual awareness.'<sup>213</sup>

### *Awakenings*

Slee finds a 'diversity of contexts within which the experience of awakening could take form' but finds that there are 'a number of common and defining features'.<sup>214</sup> Contexts include life experiences such as leaving home or separation,<sup>215</sup> travel,<sup>216</sup> finding one's centre, sometimes in relation to sexuality,<sup>217</sup> motherhood,<sup>218</sup> relating to suffering people,<sup>219</sup> the discovery of creative abilities,<sup>220</sup> illness or bereavement.<sup>221</sup> Common features include emphasis on concrete, mundane experience, and on intuition and bodily knowing over rational or abstract thought.<sup>222</sup> There is often a period of 'preparation' an unconscious movement, a build-up of tension that leads to a breakthrough.<sup>223</sup>

Awakening involves a new coherence in contrast to the 'split self' of paralysis that is a

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<sup>213</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 131-133.

<sup>214</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 114.

<sup>215</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 114.

<sup>216</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 118.

<sup>217</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 121.

<sup>218</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 125-127.

<sup>219</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 127.

<sup>220</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 129.

<sup>221</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 131.

<sup>222</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 133.

<sup>223</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 133-4.



feature of alienation.<sup>224</sup> It brings a sense of self-responsibility, experienced nevertheless as a gift of grace.<sup>225</sup> ‘Awakening to new consciousness’ requires new language to express new ‘understandings of selfhood’ and ‘models of religion and spirituality’.<sup>226</sup>

‘Awakenings’, then, bring a new perception of one’s own spirituality in relation to the world around, thereby engendering new concepts of God, faith and religion. They can lead to improved relationships with people and can enhance a personal sense of identity, the ability to love oneself and improve self-esteem and confidence.

### *Relationality*

‘Relationality’, defined as ‘faith as being in relation with God and/or the Other’<sup>227</sup> is described by Slee as a ‘sense of the presence of God at the core of life, holding things in being and nurturing one’s life’.<sup>228</sup>

Relationality is an essential component of Slee’s model, which is specifically designed to explain the faith experience of mature women within or around the British Christian Church. Her relationality theory is based upon her finding that ‘relational images were

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<sup>224</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>225</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>226</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 134.

<sup>227</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 140.

<sup>228</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 141.

dominant' in the way that the women, in interviews, expressed their faith.<sup>229</sup> They 'conceived' their faith as 'relationship to, or dialogue with, the Other – named in a wide variety of images as Father, Mother, Lover, Friend, Midwife, Child, Sister, Brother, Stranger and so on.'<sup>230</sup> They 'expressed a relational construction of faith and selfhood in a number of diverse but interconnected ways.'<sup>231</sup> Slee found that: 'The majority offered explicitly relational models of faith as being in relation with God and/or the Other, or offering relational metaphors and models of faith.'<sup>232</sup>

Some expressed this 'in terms of a strong empathic connection to others, an incarnational sense of the sacredness of the ordinary and through the prizing of integration as the ideal of faith.' Slee says that, whilst personal relationship to God is central to Christianity, 'nevertheless, the range, depth and extent of the women's understandings of connectedness, both to self, other and to God, are significant'.<sup>233</sup>

### ***c) The relationship of this thesis to Slee's theory***

In order to situate this research in an appropriate field, this thesis reviewed previous scholarship and located relevant academic theory as a starting point for development of a

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<sup>229</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 66.

<sup>230</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 66.

<sup>231</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 139.

<sup>232</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 139.

<sup>233</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 140.

new model.<sup>234</sup> The faith development theory of Slee, itself founded on but significantly departing from that of Fowler, is of immense value in explaining the data gained from this research. This is evident from the analysis and discussion of the data, based upon the terms used by Slee in her own model. However major differences in research design and focus have resulted in a different kind of data being collected and this prompts a need for modifications of Slee's model in relation to this thesis. This section reflects upon these differences and modifications, explaining points of departure and establishing the validity of the new model.

Whilst, given the differences in research aims and design, it does not seek to test or replicate Slee's research, exploring the elements of women's faith development, it tests the data against her themes (drawn from other feminist scholars)<sup>235</sup> to provide a theoretical framework. It chiefly uses Slee's theory relating to patterns of faith as a springboard to develop its own model of the processes of spiritual development amongst imprisoned boys in the Philippines. Although the research sample contrasts strongly with that of Slee's,<sup>236</sup> her theory has proved invaluable as a means of ordering the data following an analysis of its content. Reflecting upon features of this research that align with the theory developed by Slee, both similarities and differences emerge from analysis of data from interviews with staff members and other adults associated with the

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<sup>234</sup> See 1.1., 1.2., 1.3. and 1.4.

<sup>235</sup> See 1.3.3.

<sup>236</sup> See 1.4.1.

prisons and rehabilitation centres. These have potential to add to or modify Slee's theory of patterns of faith development.<sup>237</sup>

Slee's model fits well in some places and less well in some significant areas. This divergence is due to both the nature of the constituency and the focus of the study. The differences in constituency between the research of this thesis and Slee's are examined in 1.4.1.<sup>238</sup> The difference in focus is basically that whereas Slee identifies *patterns*, this thesis is concerned with *process*: whereas Slee focuses on patterns of faith, this thesis charts processes that work towards spiritual transformation.

### *Alienation*

Alienation appears to be a common factor between Slee's findings and mine.<sup>239</sup>

Adolescent crisis and feelings of hopelessness and despair were found in my data from speaking to boys in or moved from prisons.<sup>240</sup>

For the boys, experiences in 'limit situations' do not appear to have been liberating until they received help. This study goes beyond this insight to investigate the circumstances that might encourage or obstruct access through this gateway.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> See 1.3. and 1.4. for a summary and discussion of these patterns.

<sup>238</sup> See 1.4.1.

<sup>239</sup> The process of alienation of imprisoned boys is discussed in 3.2.

<sup>240</sup> For example, interview with a boy from prison, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

<sup>241</sup> As discussed in 5.1.

The Filipino boys had their own stories, as they had all lived similar lives of early deprivation and often lived on the streets, fighting for survival. They had had similar experiences of life in jail, for one or more periods and for short or prolonged sentences. Individual's experience of street life and jails differed, however, and some found more support than others. Some may have positive elements, such as camaraderie,<sup>242</sup> but all of them were found to be essentially alienating and destructive.

Although the category of 'alienation' seems alike, there is some non-conformity because of the obvious difference in constituency – mature, educated women in Britain, compared with young boys leading poverty stricken and captive lives in the Philippines – but similarities and the ways in which the two studies fit are outlined in 1.4.2.

The Filipino boys were not able to articulate everything in the ways that Slee's women could. In addition, I did not invite them to tell their faith stories or allow two hours for each individual to talk personally about their life experiences. Interviews with my boys were short and often in groups.<sup>243</sup> Time was spent asking simple questions about their lives before and during their time in the institution. However, they spoke of recent raw experience, not of events that happened decades ago. They could recall events with vividness and strength of feeling because they were young, the experience was recent and they remembered the intensity of the deprivation, pain and injustice.

Although some had undergone therapy to release them from emotional pain, the boys

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<sup>242</sup> See 3.1.2.a)

<sup>243</sup> See 2.4. and Table 2.2.

had not had time to forget the events or the feelings they had evoked, or to interpret or reframe these events from the perspective of adulthood. They certainly experienced alienation, as was evident from their conversations with me and from the reports of staff members. Whilst they did not express this in the way that Slee's women respondents did, they had clearly been isolated from the church and from concepts of God's protection and guidance. Finding God was a new experience for them in rehabilitation centres: 'Here I learnt good things to do and I recognise God and know God.'<sup>244</sup>

### *Awakening*

The present research focuses on *processes* of spiritual transformation, which it distinguishes from *periods* of awakening. The thesis employs the term 'awakening' in preference to Slee's term 'awakenings'. The reason for this is that, whereas Slee identifies three major *patterns* of women's faith development, one of which she names 'awakenings', this thesis focuses on *processes*. It identifies the *process* of 'awakening' as an active progression that takes place under certain circumstances.<sup>245</sup> It explores signs of awakening and factors that contribute to this process of spiritual awakening.<sup>246</sup> It demonstrates that awakening can lead to positive change but, even when there are signs of awakening, a boy might become alienated due to destructive treatment by others or the difficulties of his life. It treats spiritual transformation as a state of more lasting change that comes about when there are favourable factors present, as discussed in 5.1.

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<sup>244</sup> Interview with a group of boys, Gingoog RRCY 26/2/2008. See also 4.4.d).

<sup>245</sup> See 4.3.

<sup>246</sup> See 4.3. and 5.1.

Employing its own term ‘awakening’, interpreted rather differently from Slee’s use of the term ‘awakenings’, is one way in which this thesis departs from her model. Slee’s awakenings are to do with faith in a more direct sense than the manner in which this thesis speaks of ‘awakening’. In this new model ‘awakening’ is a process that contains similar features to those portrayed by Slee, but is more practical in its approach.

‘Awakening’ in this thesis is the stirring of thought processes, emotional development and spiritual growth, brought about in most cases by the treatment received in rehabilitation. It includes the new-found appreciation of having a ‘normal life’.<sup>247</sup> It is stimulated not only by religious teaching but also by fundamental requirements such as love, acceptance and appropriate discipline.<sup>248</sup> The elements of this gradual change of mindset<sup>249</sup> can be demonstrated individually but are regarded as inseparable as they are integral to the boy’s journey towards wholeness.

Thus, due to the difference in research constituency, focus and design the argument of this thesis departs slightly from Slee’s model in its use of the term ‘awakening’, although many features resemble hers. From this process of awakening, stimulated by the pro-transformative action of the centres, come the first shoots of a new sense of identity, self-love, self-esteem and confidence. The awakening process leads to improved relationships with family, peers, authority figures and other adults. It gives rise

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<sup>247</sup> The features of this normal life are shown in Table 5.1.

<sup>248</sup> These requirements are shown in Table 5.1.

<sup>249</sup> See Table 5.1.

to an appreciation of the natural environment and the boy's place in society. It kindles belief in God and discovery of ways in which boys can relate to the divine.

In conclusion, the process of awakening<sup>250</sup> departs from Slee's framework in some respects. The pattern of spiritual awakenings identified by Slee may depend upon possessing greater emotional and psychological maturity that is beyond the reach of adolescent boys. At their age and stage, concepts of religious faith are strongly related to the teaching they receive and to peer pressure and group loyalty. Their 'awakening', as described in this thesis, is more fundamental and holistic than the spiritual 'awakenings' described by Slee. It involves recognition, realisation, enlightenment, reflection and finding identity.<sup>251</sup> There is inevitably dissimilarity between the kinds of transformation possible at adolescence and those available to adults.

As opposed to Slee's theme of 'awakenings', which she found to be a pattern of women's faithing, this thesis argues that a *process* of 'awakening', if nurtured, can be a step towards spiritual change in the lives of imprisoned boys.

### *Transformative Action and Regression*

This thesis develops further themes with regard to the process of awakening. It identifies elements of *pro-transformative* action that can assist the young person to move forward

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<sup>250</sup> As traced in detail in 4.2.

<sup>251</sup> As demonstrated in 4.3.



in this process.<sup>252</sup> It also identifies many factors, grouped under the theme of *counter-transformative* action, which can hinder the process at the stage of awakening.<sup>253</sup> The new model thus allows for external input and for the possibility of regression.

### *Improved relationship*

‘Relationality’ is a significant feature of Slee’s model of women’s faith patterns. In line with the emphasis on process, this thesis finds that a process of improving relationships is integral to progress towards spiritual transformation, defined as ‘a significant positive development in one’s ability to make or find purpose and meaning in life through relationship with the divine spirit, oneself, others and the natural world.’<sup>254</sup>

Relationship is thus also an essential component of the new model, which is designed to explain the process of spiritual development in the context of imprisoned Filipino boys. There is substantial evidence of improved relationships in the data, but its form appears to be different, or at least less developed or less explicit than in Slee’s data. There could be various reasons for this but they would appear to be mainly due to the differences in this research sample. Here again, Slee’s pattern relates to mature, experienced British women, as opposed to adolescent, Filipino, institutionalised boys. There are significant ways in which the findings necessitate a divergence from the model created by Slee.

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<sup>252</sup> See 5.1.1.

<sup>253</sup> See 5.1.2.

<sup>254</sup> See 1.1.2.

Previous to their rehabilitation, boys had formed relationships but many of them were problematic: mothers were sometimes spoken of as irresponsible, fathers as absent, step-fathers and uncles as abusive and peers as leading them astray. Boys themselves had betrayed trust, stolen from their mothers, relatives or neighbours and fought with their peers. Important relationships had been fractured: they missed their siblings, their grandmothers and their friends.

On the streets and in jail, boys might look to gang leaders and members to fulfil their physical and emotional needs, but these relationships are not constructive in their healthy development.<sup>255</sup> Boys come into contact with police and court and prison officers. The treatment frequently received by these has been documented in 1.2.1. Sometimes security and love can be gained by attaching oneself to a fellow-inmate, such as experienced by boys in the Cebu jail before moving to CCOSCC,<sup>256</sup> but such attachment can lead to paedophile and predatory exploitation. Prison warders, renamed ‘houseparents’ cannot be relied upon for consistent care.<sup>257</sup> The most reliable and caring figure during imprisonment is likely to be the priest who visits briefly and periodically for ‘values formation’.

Following discharge from jail and admittance to a rehabilitation centre, boys immediately have access to caring adults and sympathetic friends. It can take time for a

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<sup>255</sup> See 3.2.2.

<sup>256</sup> See 3.1.2.

<sup>257</sup> See 3.2.2. and 5.1.2.i).

boy to understand enough to trust the adults, especially those who set the rules and administer discipline. It also takes time to learn to relate to other boys, who may even come from rival gangs. However, through the combined features of the programme and the consistent unconditional love offered them, boys start to improve their self-image and self-esteem assisting them in forming healthy and reciprocal relationships with their peers as well as leaders and staff members or houseparents.

Some boys referred to rehabilitation centre female houseparents as ‘Mamas’, seeing them as substitute mothers and compensation for former deprivation, saying ‘they treat us as their own children’ and ‘because I didn’t have any parents when I was growing up’. Priests are called ‘Father’ in Roman Catholicism and they are relied upon for guidance, support and mediation. Boys who had advanced in spiritual maturity were able to form their own views of what fatherhood should look like and determine to carry this through into adult life.<sup>258</sup>

This study contends that improved relationship is developed throughout the process of rehabilitation as an integral component of awakening and spiritual transformation.

The new model incorporates the theme of human relationships, especially of simulated family life, leader guidance and supportive peer interactions as significant features of spiritual development.<sup>259</sup> Boys progress to reconciliation with family members and proceed to widen their circle of constructive relationships by attending school, Church

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<sup>258</sup> See 4.4.i).

<sup>259</sup> See 4.4. a) to 4.4.i).

clubs and activities. Through the teaching and other programme components, they learn what it is to have a relationship with the divine and with the natural world. This, in brief, is the process of improved relationship that leads towards spiritual transformation.

In the data from research participants, child or adult, in this study there are no instances of relational imagery for the Other, who is always called 'God' or, in the Protestant programme 'the Lord'. Perhaps because of their age, or gender or the religious teaching in the Philippines, references to relations were all human: many boys referred to the loss, absence, neglect or irresponsibility of their biological mothers; fathers were generally seen as absent figures, who should have been there to guide them but were not. Siblings were sorely missed and uncles left to care for boys had exploited or abused them.

Thus familial relationship statements revealed deprivations that led to alienation and were never employed to describe a spiritual relationship. 'In some of Slee's accounts, 'God was known as the benevolent Father who has never forsaken his child and who will meet all her needs ...'<sup>260</sup> In contrast, the PREDA experience is that: 'After their abuse and neglect, many of the children are understandably sceptical about the existence of God, particularly a benevolent one.'<sup>261</sup> Relational terms are not directly used to name God or to express faith in the divine. In Christian teaching, God is often referred to as 'Father', but boys struggle with this concept due to their own experience of neglect or

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<sup>260</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 140.

<sup>261</sup> Internal documentation, PREDA, 2008.

abuse by father figures.<sup>262</sup>

Such expressions as ‘incarnational sense of the sacredness of the ordinary’ and integration as the ideal of faith’ are mainly ‘understandings’ from a point of maturity and experience not possessed by the boys in my study, who would also not be able to embrace a deep, extensive sense of connectedness. Slee finds its aspects ‘reminiscent of Fowler’s Stage 5’,<sup>263</sup> whereas few of my boys were likely to have been beyond Fowler’s Stage 4. However, relational language is used in speaking of faith in God, who is seen by boys as someone to be called upon for guidance and support in times of need or temptation: ‘I need God’s guidance to overcome challenges to me’<sup>264</sup> and by staff members as being capable of bringing about spiritual change in the lives of boys.<sup>265</sup> It is true that, particularly in the Protestant centre, personal relationship with God is seen as central to Christian faith; this brings changes in relationships with others, too: ‘I am closer to God, faithful to people I am with. It changes my relationship with people as well as with God.’<sup>266</sup> However, God, often referred to in hierarchical terms as ‘the Lord’, is seen as someone powerful who is in charge and an agent for personal transformation: ‘the Lord put that in my heart’; the Lord was the one who changed my life.’<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> See 3.2.2.

<sup>263</sup> Slee, *Women’s Faith Development*, 143

<sup>264</sup> Interview with a group of boys, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>265</sup> Interview with staff member, PREDA, 8/2/2008.

<sup>266</sup> Interview with boy, Ahon Sa Kalye, 16/2/2008.

<sup>267</sup> Interview with boy, Ahon Sa Kalye, 16/2/2008.

In conclusion, Slee's construct of 'relationality' describes a conceptually advanced sense of being in relationship with the divine in which God is seen to be central in security and nurture.

Mature women tend to use a wide variety of relational images and models of faith as a dominant feature of their spiritual language. They express strong understandings of connectedness with others.

These features are all beyond the experience of the adolescent participants of this research. There is, however, evidence of relationships being of prime importance in the boys' lives. They speak of how they miss their family and friends. They feel abandoned by those who should have taken responsibility to care for them as children.

Peer groups, which are dominant at this stage of life, have often been destructive.

Improved relationships are a vital feature of spiritual transformation. Finding new, trustworthy friends is important and, for boys who previously lacked familial security, relationships with adults in rehabilitation centres are also prized. In addition, renewed bonds with family members are generally possible, even when reconciliation work is needed.

Boys do not use relational language about the divine, but the data show enhanced relationships in spiritual aspects, such as boys who say that they learned to love or to trust God. They speak of God, or the Lord, as they have been taught, without the use of metaphor, but this God (always male) is personified as someone capable of relationship.

This improved relationship is part of the process that encourages and enables boys to make spiritual progress. Thus the new model incorporates improved relationship as an integral part of the awakening and transformation process.

### **Summary of the new model**

This research focuses on fulfilling its stated aims, to document the work of governmental and non-governmental organisations in the Philippines to free children from prison and aid their rehabilitation and to analyse the processes of spiritual transformation that enable children who have been in prison to be successfully rehabilitated.<sup>268</sup> Slee's three patterns are found in the data in this thesis, as has been demonstrated throughout and it is clear that alienation is an experience shared by Slee's women respondents and the Filipino boys.

However, there are three interrelated ways in which the model of this thesis deviates from the model formulated by Slee. The interrelationship arises from the fact that Slee's model identifies major *themes* of faith development, whereas the new model demonstrates significant *processes* of spiritual development.<sup>269</sup>

Firstly, whereas Slee uses for her second major theme the plural term 'awakenings', and defines it as a transformation,<sup>270</sup> this thesis employs the singular term 'awakening' as a

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<sup>268</sup> See 2.1.

<sup>269</sup> The new model developed in this thesis is depicted in Figure 5.1.

<sup>270</sup> Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 112.

gradual experience of life that aids progress towards a more lasting spiritual change, separately named ‘spiritual transformation’.

Secondly, unlike Slee’s model, this thesis takes account of the value of external input and traces ways in which processes of spiritual transformation can be blocked or encouraged.<sup>271</sup> Thus the new model also accommodates the possibility of regression in its fluid design.

Thirdly, whereas Slee employs the term ‘relationality’ as a major theme of women’s faith development, this thesis incorporates the capacity for, and the achievement of, significant ‘improved relationship’ into its model of processes of spiritual transformation.<sup>272</sup>

### **Subsection conclusion**

Fowler and Slee are similar in some respects, since Fowler analyses stages of faith and Slee examines the nature of faith. This thesis is in a different mode, since it observes processes of change. Slee uses Fowler as a springboard; this thesis uses Slee’s theory as a base from which to launch a new model. In seeking an academic framework, it finds that the faith development theory developed by Slee in relation to women’s faithing can be used to shed light upon the findings in relation to academic scholarship. In this light, it recognises that some parts of the findings fit Slee’s theory better than others. The

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<sup>271</sup> As discussed in 5.1.

<sup>272</sup> As shown in 4.4.



patterns of women's faithing can be used to some extent to clarify and organise the data from the Filipino boys. This study, which deals only with boys, mostly teenagers who have suffered hardship and deprivation, draws upon both theories to explain the data. The research sample of boys in prison has the inherent advantage of being in a sense an extreme case and one in which many of the participants are literally 'captive', so that influences regarding growth can be more clearly determined. It concludes that a more active and fluid model is appropriate for boys who have suffered deprivation and undergone a period of residential rehabilitation.

This thesis does not set out to prove, disprove or modify Fowler's stage development theory or Slee's arguments. It sets out to fulfil the aims, as stated in Chapter One, to document the work of rehabilitation centres, to trace the process of spiritual transformation in the lives of imprisoned boys and to identify the factors that assist in this process. It analyses data collected directly from boys and relevant adults in the Philippines, sifting out the major themes to determine the nature, the processes and the influences of spiritual change in the boys. The thesis in some respects goes beyond established faith development theory by examining concepts of *alienation*, *awakening* and *spiritual transformation*, as employed by others, and revealing both influential factors that can form a barrier to spiritual progress and those that can facilitate it.

### **Section conclusion**

The findings of this unique study largely support previous spiritual transformation and faith development theory. Whilst stage development theory seems partially inadequate to describe the experiences of imprisoned boys, the concept of a new 'master story'

involving reliable relationships in which trust can develop, is undoubtedly useful.

This study reinforces Pearmain's argument regarding the value of a 'safe haven' in faith development; it sheds new light on that theory by contrasting some establishments that are not safe havens with some that are. It demonstrates how external factors and positive intervention can play a major part in the spiritual development of imprisoned adolescent boys. The findings resonate with Slee's patterns of faith development, as similar patterns are present in this research sample, but this thesis claims that *awakening* can be a step, or a gradient, on the way to spiritual transformation, rather than a phase that includes it. It adds a new dimension to faith development theory in the perception that, after *awakening*, a person can develop spiritually and in faith by consolidating positive changes, or can regress.

This thesis approaches established theory from a fresh perspective, based on resourceful fieldwork, and thus develops an innovative hypothesis. Thematic analysis techniques applied to the rich data from a range of qualitative interviews have yielded a creative and original theory of spiritual transformation.

This section has examined the relationship of this research to previous scholarship on religion and spirituality, and the work of faith development theorists Fowler and Slee. The next section highlights the implications of the study for future research.

### **5.3. Implications for future research**

#### **Introduction**

This section discusses the implications of this thesis for academic research (5.3.1.) and

for policy and practice, paying particular attention to juvenile penal systems in developing countries (5.3.2.).

### **5.3.1. Implications for academic research**

The findings of this thesis have a bearing on future studies in faith development and spiritual transformation theory. The dearth of relevant previous scholarship directly relating to spiritual transformation in relation to young offenders strongly indicates the need for more research in this field. The theory of processes of spiritual transformation and the models of residential institutions as expounded could be researched in other groups, which could include imprisoned adults and non-imprisoned children and adults.

Research has shown that religious belief has a positive effect on behaviour. Kent Kerley et al., in a study of inmates in a large US prison, found that belief ‘in a higher power’ and that ‘right and wrong are based on God's laws’, and attendance at religious services and a Christian event ‘significantly reduced the odds of inmate arguing.’<sup>273</sup> They conclude that their study ‘lends support to the idea that religion can reduce antisocial behaviors, even in an extreme case such as prison.’<sup>274</sup> However, only the former two belief factors, not the behavioural aspects of religious participation, correlated positively with incidents of fighting. This thesis supports Kerley’s finding that internalised religious beliefs positively affect behaviour, but contends that the reason why religious

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<sup>273</sup> Kent R. Kerley, Todd L. Matthews and Troy C. Blanchard, ‘Religiosity, Religious Participation, and Negative Prison Behaviors’, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44, no. 4 (2005): 453.

<sup>274</sup> Kerley et al., ‘Religiosity, Religious Participation, and Negative Prison Behaviors’: 453.

teaching and attendance at religious services does not always succeed is that it is not backed up the ethos of the jail setting and is therefore not internalised by prisoners.

Helmut Reich's five criteria for an ideal theory of religious development include, 'it must specify mechanisms by which change occurs, including factors favourable or unfavourable to spirituality.'<sup>275</sup> This study identifies such mechanisms, revealing clear factors, both favourable and unfavourable, by relating young people's experiences of spiritual nurture and transformation to the manner in which centres operate and thus highlights the elements most likely to foster transformation amongst this constituency. Of paramount importance for scholarship is the theory of *pro-transformative* and *counter-transformative* action that has emerged from extensive analysis of this research data. Both the nature of spiritual transformation and the factors that can encourage or hinder it are important areas for ongoing research. This study could usefully be replicated in other parts of the world and with other constituencies.

This study looks specifically at the spiritual needs of boys who come into conflict with the law and suffer the abandonment and abuse of imprisonment, focusing on the processes of their rehabilitation into society. In order to meet the spiritual needs of boys, especially those with a low level of literacy, education or experience, it is vital to employ appropriate resources. Boys, in general, need active ways of learning to relate with one another and with the world around them, not least because, given a choice of

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<sup>275</sup> Helmut K. Reich, 'Religious Development Across The Life Span: Conventional and Cognitive Developmental Approaches', in David L. Featherman, Richard M. Lerner and Marion Perlmutter, eds, *Life-Span Development and Behavior* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992), 151.

activities, most will opt to participate in sport, to watch films, enjoy puppetry or to play music and dance. This predilection can be harnessed for spiritual growth and such activities can be used effectively in spiritual as well as in other areas of education, so that: ‘All aspects of the lifestyle, programme and teaching are mutually supporting, developing trust and creating rich ground for seed to be sown.’<sup>276</sup>

The study has implications for scholarship in areas relating to child care practice, to the treatment of offenders and to the population as a whole. The findings and discussion of this research, relating to the nature of spiritual transformation in imprisoned boys, stimulate many further questions, which could form the basis for future research endeavours, such as:

- Would the same model be useful for girls in prison?
- Would it be useful for adults in prison?
- Would it work in other under-developed countries like the Philippines?
- Would it work in British prisons or in Western cultures?
- How would it transfer to more secular cultures as opposed to the religious culture?
- Would the factors shown in Table 5.1. help to sustain spiritual transformation in the lives of people who have not been in conflict with the law?
- Would it work without religious input?
- Do these factors match people’s accounts of spiritual transformation?

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<sup>276</sup> Interview with a staff member, Gingoog RRCY, 26/2/2008.

Section 5.3.2. examines the main situations in which the research findings are considered relevant to policy and practice and proposes areas for further research.

### **5.3.2. Implications for policy and practice**

This section discusses the implications of this thesis for policy and practice, with particular attention to the juvenile penal system in developing countries.

Despite continued efforts by some regional governments and NGOs in the Philippines, all is not well: ‘how blatant was and is the violation of the human rights of children by the authorities against all the conventions and protocols signed by the Philippine government to protect children's rights.’<sup>277</sup> In November 2011, UNICEF reported:

Efforts to lower the age of criminal responsibility to 9 years of age have been initiated in Congress, following reports attributing an increase in criminality involving children to the passage of RA 9344. UNICEF has made efforts to avoid this regression through advocacy with GPH partners and bringing forward evidence of good practice. The full implementation of the law is further challenged by local government units (LGUs) which are unable and/or unwilling to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to establish a comprehensive community-based juvenile delinquency prevention program.<sup>278</sup>

This study and further research that set out to duplicate or extend the fieldwork could be utilised to advocate for appropriate care to be offered to all CICL in the Philippines.

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<sup>277</sup> <http://www.british-filipino.co.uk/archive/index.php/t-3909.html> accessed 23/01/2013.

<sup>278</sup> Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council (UNICEF Philippines, 2011), 5. [http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session13/PH/UNICEF\\_UPR\\_PHL\\_S13\\_2012\\_UNICEF\\_E.pdf](http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session13/PH/UNICEF_UPR_PHL_S13_2012_UNICEF_E.pdf) accessed 23/11/2012. GPH stands for Government of the Philippines.

The research findings are also pertinent to places where the situation regarding imprisoned children is similar to that pertaining in the Philippines at the time of the data collection. In many countries, boys from families living in extreme poverty spend too much time on the streets and are put into jails while they are still minors.<sup>279</sup> Imprisoned children suffer appalling conditions in overcrowded cells, often without basic necessities or any occupation.<sup>280</sup> In Argentina, for instance, children (one only six years old) arrested for begging were found in a cold, dark cell with no toilet facilities.<sup>281</sup> In 2005, many children were serving prison sentences of up to 15 years in the DRC; some were jailed when parents, too poverty-stricken to cope with a large family, or whose children had behavioural problems or disabilities, declared them to be witches.<sup>282</sup>

In some countries, children with physical, mental or learning disabilities are jailed with a stated intention of protection.<sup>283</sup> However, imprisonment increases the potential for exploitation and abuse. In India, numerous street children live in extreme poverty or neglect, especially in large cities, and survive by petty crime.<sup>284</sup> In Indonesia 26,000 young offenders were found detained;<sup>285</sup> 20,000 were in juvenile institutions in

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<sup>279</sup> See 1.2.1.

<sup>280</sup> For example, see *Pakistan: Denial of basic rights for child prisoners* (Amnesty International: 2003), 2. Further examples can be found in Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*.

<sup>281</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 70.

<sup>282</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 11.

<sup>283</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 8.

<sup>284</sup> Cullen, et al., *kids behind bars*, 77.

<sup>285</sup> Around 3,500 of these were in adult jails, Shay Cullen, et al. *kids behind bars*, 77.

Argentina,<sup>286</sup> 9,591 in Brazilian jails<sup>287</sup> and 904 imprisoned in Romania.<sup>288</sup> In Pakistan, in 2004, children's rights were being violated, minors were imprisoned and executed and a nine-year-old was undergoing a 273-year jail sentence.<sup>289</sup> In 2009, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported 26 minors tortured, under the guise of 'corporal punishment', mostly by police or schoolteachers.<sup>290</sup> In such countries, jail conditions tend to be comparable to, or maybe worse than, those in the Philippines and children are commonly jailed 'where the likelihood of contact with adults is high'.<sup>291</sup>

### *Children in the justice system*

Minors are often tried in adult courts rather than under a juvenile justice system designed to offer them special protection. Most lack legal advice or support at court appearances. Sometimes laws make it almost impossible for children to keep from conflict with them: removing from Ugandan statute the crime of 'being idle and disorderly' drastically reduced the numbers of children treated as criminals.<sup>292</sup>

There is some growing awareness of the needs of children in the justice system. Of the

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<sup>286</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 70.

<sup>287</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 82.

<sup>288</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 81.

<sup>289</sup> Asma Jahangir, *Bang bang, hang hang* (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2004). <http://hrqp-web.org/shownews.asp?id=22> accessed 28/1/2013.

<sup>290</sup> <http://hrqp-web.org/PDF/2009%20-%20Corporal%20Punishment.pdf> accessed 15/12/2012. See, Summary on pages 1-2.

<sup>291</sup> Although some Brazilian states refused to give information of this kind. Cullen, et al. *kids behind bars*, 72.

<sup>292</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 83.



countries surveyed for Jubilee Action, only Uganda had specialised children's courts and an emphasis on community options rather than imprisonment, although children could still be held in detention.<sup>293</sup> Often collaborative efforts by court officials, children's rights organisations and other advocates have resulted in legislation to establish more appropriate procedures in dealing with children, whether accused, victims or witnesses, but progress is slow. In Thailand, for instance, efforts were made to prevent children from being victimised by the justice system,<sup>294</sup> but this legislation was later revised due to excessive workloads of the courts, police and social workers and the constant need for appropriate equipment and training.<sup>295</sup>

It is likely that similar patterns of alienation and recidivism are prevalent in many places and, therefore, that the establishment of rehabilitation centres, such as those researched for this study, in these places would bring about beneficial changes by breaking the cycle for individual boys and families. Policy makers would benefit from paying attention to these research findings:

- Penal institutions based on the *Containment model* have harmful effects on their residents and do not meet the needs of CICL.
- Government centres based on the *Boundaried Care* model assist in the rehabilitation of such youngsters.

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<sup>293</sup> Cullen et al., *kids behind bars*, 83.

<sup>294</sup> *Justice for Children: Detention as a Last Resort. Innovative Initiatives in the East Asia and Pacific Region* (UNICEF, 2005), 10.

<sup>295</sup> *Justice for Children: Detention as a Last Resort*, 12.

- Children who stay a sufficient length of time in homes based on the *Developing Trust* model stand a good chance of effecting lasting changes in their lives.

As in the Philippines, many negative *counter-transformative* elements are seen to exist in the treatment of CICL elsewhere. To replace these with *pro-transformative* elements would entail removing children from a justice system that imprisons them and prioritising their needs. Resources currently used for incarcerating them could be employed to provide more professional care workers and structures. Where residential care is deemed essential or favourable, government or NGOs could establish holistic rehabilitation centres based on the *Developing Trust* model, with programmes that address the needs of the youngsters and promote their well-being and all-round development.

A residential centre should be a pleasant place to live in safety and with basic needs met, staffed with caring, accepting adults who become suitable role models for adolescent boys. The training curriculum for these adults should include understanding the causes of deviant behaviour. Ungar's view of one of these causes is noteworthy in this context: 'As many high-risk youth are placed in group homes, foster homes, treatment centres, and custodial facilities, these relational contexts play an important role in the construction of youth identities. Within these institutional and community care settings youth must nurture, maintain and challenge identity constructions.'<sup>296</sup> Behaviours labelled as deviant may be strategies to resist the problem-saturated identities imposed

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<sup>296</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 176.

upon them and function to maintain a sense of power, thus evidencing a ‘healthy response to a disempowering situation’.<sup>297</sup> This thesis has demonstrated that if staff members resist imposing such identities upon youngsters and, instead, encourage them to rebuild a personal sense of identity, mindset and behaviour gradually change.<sup>298</sup>

A centre should have facilities for education and vocational training commensurate with the youngsters’ current abilities and future needs. The programme should incorporate regular and consistent values formation and spiritual enrichment, taught both in a manner relevant to the boys’ lives and lived out moment by moment in the centre. Residential courses should cater for boys to receive any necessary therapy and to have sufficient time to progress at individual rates through stages of awakening towards lasting transformation.<sup>299</sup> On occasions when boys revert to old ways of thinking and acting, they need patient counselling and opportunities to try again until their attitudes and behaviour are changed permanently. Much can be done to improve self-esteem, self-reliance and self-confidence and young people who have experienced spiritual change can be instrumental in the lives of others. In addition, as Ungar states, institutions can ‘provide opportunities for youth to assert desirable social roles by facilitating and maintaining contact’ between them and the community.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 176.

<sup>298</sup> See 4.4.

<sup>299</sup> See 5.1.1.

<sup>300</sup> Ungar, *Nurturing Hidden Resilience in Troubled Youth*, 177.

Rehabilitation centre programmes should be designed to incorporate features that have been described in this thesis as being vital to the holistic well-being of children and conducive to spiritual transformation. It is worth noting the observation of a staff member: 'Occasionally, boys abscond and try to run away, but figures showed that no boys who committed serious crime ran away.'<sup>301</sup> The benefits of such a system far outweigh such risks. Cullen describes the transformation process thus:

When family, community, school and society provide little positive inputs to young people who are desperate for dignity, respect, attention, and acceptance, we can expect rebellious youth filled with anger or hatred because they are unwanted, excluded and hopeless. Many young people turn rebellious when they are excluded from a life of economic and racial equality, opportunity and education. With concern, respect, friendship and opportunity they can be inspired to live a good life but they need trusting adults they can admire and imitate. If treated well, most will become good. If abused, some tend to become abusers. They will respond to the friendly attention of a role model, and fulfill their obligations and responsibilities. I see this transformation every day in the lives of the 54 kids taken from prisons to an open trusting affirmative environment. Give respect and goodness to youth (if they are not too damaged) and you will get it in return.<sup>302</sup>

### *Difficulties of implementing rehabilitation programmes*

Organisations that attempt to rehabilitate imprisoned children are likely to encounter problems such as dealing with intractable political, legal, governmental and official

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<sup>301</sup> Interview with a staff member, PREDA, 6/2/2008.

<sup>302</sup> Shay Cullen, 'Ending the Culture of Violence' [article online] available from <http://www.preda.org/main/archives/2010/r10082501.html> accessed 27/8/2010. Shay Cullen's regular columns are published in The Manila Times, in publications in Ireland, UK, Hong Kong and on the worldwide web.

systems, persecution, prevention of action by refusal of permission or simply long delays in being able to establish and implement suitable programmes. It can be difficult to obtain the release of a child from jail in the face of a weighty, traditional judicial institution or to persuade a judge to release a young offender into the care of a NGO initially, rather than commit him to prison. If local government departments paid attention to dealing with these potential difficulties, faster progress could be achieved.

International aid agencies could also make good use of the findings of this study.

Where a society is made chaotic by war, civil uprising, poverty or natural disaster, it can be virtually impossible to trace the families of children to reintegrate them or to gain permission to house and care for them. Financial constraints are likely to affect the acquisition of appropriate premises, transport and administrative equipment. Material support is necessary to provide ongoing care, food, bedding and other necessities for the children. Suitable personnel have to be sought, recruited, trained and remunerated, in order to provide a positive environment for the children.

### **Section conclusion**

The study demonstrates constructive ways in which CICL can be assisted in the process of spiritual transformation. The work of NGOs and regional government departments, such as those featured in this research, currently fulfils the needs of a minute proportion of children leading traumatic lives in jails. More research is necessary in order to establish principles whereby children can be released from captivity and enabled to lead purposeful and fulfilling lives. Publication of this research will show what is being done in one part of the world. Beneficent individuals and organisations might use the

information to set up similar programmes on a global scale in order to bring justice and hope to many more young people.<sup>303</sup>

## **Chapter summary**

This chapter demonstrated how circumstances can work either towards or against the processes of spiritual transformation (5.1.) and shed light upon the manner in which factors conducive to spiritual transformation can be woven into an effective, holistic programme of rehabilitation for CICL (Table 5.1.). Reflections on the theoretical framework indicated how previous scholarship relating to spiritual transformation and faith development has been modified and extended by this new study (5.2.). The final section (5.3.) suggested useful areas of further academic research and discussed implications of this study for future scholarship and for related policy and practice.

## *Final reflections*

The theory developed in this thesis has two major dimensions: its emphasis on appropriate treatment of children in conflict with the law and its expansion of faith development theory.

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<sup>303</sup> The principles of *pro-transformative action* and *counter-transformative action* could be applied to any practice concerned with faith development and promoting lasting change. The value of the *Developing Trust* model for institutions also has potential for wider application. The following are potential areas for future investigation: female child prisoners; juvenile justice policy in England and Wales; adult prisoners; child care institutions; young people in family homes; religious education in schools and church youth groups.

One strength of this study lies in the originality of the research design: the idea to study imprisoned boys in the Philippines in this way is unprecedented. Methodologically, strengths are inherent in listening to the views of both adults and boys and the cross-comparison made possible by studying the work and life of ten different institutions. From this fieldwork, new concepts have evolved to describe differing models of residential institution. The research design has been fruitful in terms of innovative models of institutional care for CICL: *Containment, Boundaried Care* and *Developing Trust*.

On the second dimension, faith development theory is advanced by the development of a new model that takes into account the influence of external factors and allows for regression as well as progression. This is embedded in the terms *pro-transformative* and *counter-transformative* action.

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